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THE TRAVELS

OF

MARCO POLO

FOR

BOYS AND GIRLS

WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES AND COMMENTS

BY

THOMAS W. KNOX

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY TRAVELLERS IN THE FAR EAST," FIVE VOLS.; "THE YOUNG NIMRODS," TWO VOLS.; "THE VOYAGE OF THE VIVIAN," "OVERLAND THROUGH ASIA," "BACKSHEESH," "UNDERGROUND," "JOHN," "CAMP-FIRE AND COTTON-FIELD," "THE POCKET GUIDE AROUND THE WORLD," ETC., ETC.

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PREFACE.

To the student of geography Marco Polo needs no introduction. He is revered as the greatest of all travellers in the Middle Ages, and, by more than one careful geographer, his work is believed to have led to the discovery of the New World by the Hardy Mariner of Genoa. Before his time no explorer from Europe had traversed the entire longitude of Asia, and given a list of its Empires and Kingdoms in the order in which they lay along his route. He was the first traveller who told us of the Steppes of Central Asia, the Mountains and Rivers of Cathay, the plateau of "The Roof of the World," and the Desert Plains of Mongolia. He was the first to give us a detailed description of the people of China, the pomp and splendor of the Court of Kublai Khan, the wonders of the Indian Archipelago, the tropical luxuriance of Java and Sumatra, and the strange productions of Siam and Laos, of Burmah and Cochin-China, and the far-off Islands of Madagascar and Zanzibar.

It was from Marco Polo that Europe first learned of the existence of Japan, and from him, too, it derived its first knowledge of the Land of Darkness in the Far North, and of the Arctic Ocean beyond. His description ranges from Siberia to Ceylon, and from the Adriatic Sea to the Pacific Ocean. The story of his travels was received with incredulity, and he died while Europe was gravely doubting its truth. It has remained for later generations to establish the correctness of his narrative and accord him the praise he so richly deserves.

In preparing this volume for the press, the writer has exercised the greatest care in endeavoring to adapt it for the youthful reader. He has followed as closely as possible the original text;

he has retained many pages entirely unchanged, and the boys and girls who read the book may imagine that they are listening to the Famous Venetian as he dictates his story to his Fellow Captive in the gloomy Prison of Genoa. Where the narrative is tedious, as in the story of the Tartar Wars, it has been abridged, and where the accounts of manners and customs are not in harmony with the taste of our times, they have been omitted. Happily the instances of this kind are few, and the Story of Marco Polo is presented with very slight reduction or alteration.

Various plans were considered for the arrangement of the needed notes of explanation and comment, and for exhibiting the changes, or absence of change, in the Countries of the East during the six Centuries that have elapsed since Polo's Travels. After much deliberation the "Young Folks' Reading and Geographical Society" was organized, and the hope is entertained that its work will receive the reader's approval.

Especial acknowledgement is due to Colonel Henry Yule, whose admirable edition of "The Book of Ser Marco Polo" has been made the basis of the present volume. His notes have been freely used, and in some cases their language is adopted without quotation marks. His work is unquestionably the best of all the many editions of Marco Polo's Travels, and those who wish the story in greater detail than it is here given, should procure his two portly and finely printed volumes.

Many of the illustrations are reproduced from Colonel Yule's work. Others have been taken from the books named herewith, or drawn from photographs and sketches, both native and foreign. The care exercised with the text has been extended to all the illustrations without regard to their origin.

Scores of books have been examined during the preparation of this story for boys and girls, and their contents have furnished material for the remarks of Fred Bronson and other members of the Society. Prominent among these works may be mentioned the following :

Vambery's "Travels in Central Asia"; Buckingham's

"Travels in Mesopotamia"; Keane's "Compendium of Asia"; Gilmour's "Among the Mongols"; Stack's "Six Months in Persia"; Bird's "Unbeaten Tracks in Japan" and "The Golden Chersonese"; Atkinson's "Oriental and Western Siberia" and "Travels on the Amoor"; Mrs. Atkinson's "Recollections of Tartar Steppes"; Fortune's "Wanderings in China," "Residence in China," and "Travels in the Tea-Districts of China and India"; Mouhot's "Travels in Indo-China, Cambodia, and Laos"; Williams' "Middle Kingdom"; Oppert's "Forbidden Land"; and Gill's "River of Golden Sand."

The writer has also availed himself of information obtained in the journeys he has made through Asia, and his visits to Cities and Countries embraced in Polo's narrative. His fondest wishes will be gratified if the "Travels of Marco Polo" should meet the kindly reception accorded to "The Boy Travellers in the Far East."

T. W. K.

New York, *April*, 1885.

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CHAPTER I.

The Young Folks' Reading and Geographical Society; How and for What it was Formed—Marco Polo and His Book—History of the Great Venetian Traveller—How He Established His Identity on His Return—A Book Written in Prison; Its Geographical Value.

Arms of the Polo Family.

Mr. Henry Allen rapped three times on the table.

After a pause of half a minute he rapped again and said:

"The Society will please come to order."

The hum of conversation ceased; the twenty or more persons present settled into chairs or upon a long sofa at one side of the room; and in a little while the desired "order" was secured. Then the young man at the table proceeded without further delay to the business of the evening.

"You are all aware," said he, "that the object of the meeting to-night is to consider the life and travels of Marco Polo. I hope the members of the Society are prepared with full information upon the subject."

While he pauses at the end of the above announcement we will endeavor to ascertain the nature of the assemblage before us. It was known as "The Young Folks' Reading and Geographical Society," and owed its existence to the efforts of the youth of eighteen years or more who occupied the chair of President. The Society met once a week "for purposes of mental improvement," as set forth in the preamble of its organization, and it was decided at the first meeting that the readings and studies of the Society should be devoted to geographical subjects. Hence the name which had been chosen for the Association. It included about twenty youths and maidens of

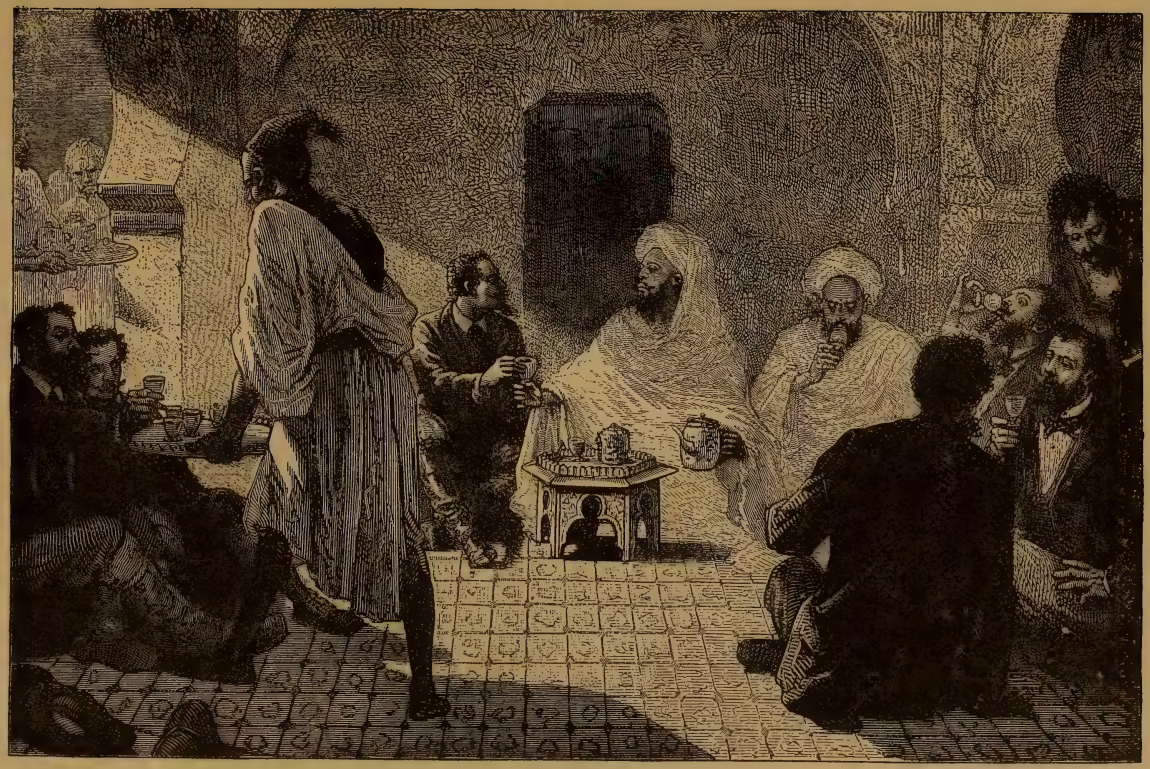
the village, and the meetings had been held in rotation at the houses of the members. The parents and friends of the members were always invited to attend, and their presence and suggestions did a great deal to encourage the young folks in the work they had undertaken.

On the evening in question the meeting was held in the library of Dr. Allen, the uncle of the presiding officer. The doctor, a gray-haired and dignified gentleman, was seated in a corner of the library, and was an interested observer of the proceedings. He had been in many parts of the world, and it was well known that his collection of books included more works of travel than any other library in the village. The walls were hung with maps and charts wherever the shelves and book-cases allowed room for them; and at one side was a cabinet of curiosities gathered from the countries he had seen. The young people were fond of visiting his library, and when the meeting was called to order that evening, every member of the Society was present.

Behind the President and above his head there was hanging a large sheet of drawing-paper, on which was displayed a blue shield with a broad stripe of silver running diagonally across it. On the stripe were three birds, painted in black; they appeared to be walking and holding their mouths open, but whether for song or food it was impossible to determine. We are permitted to state that the painting of the shield was the work of Miss Mary Allen, Henry's sister, who had taken the first prize in her drawing-class at the last term of school.

Henry observed that the eyes of several members of the Society were turned in the direction of the shield, and were evidently unable to comprehend its meaning.

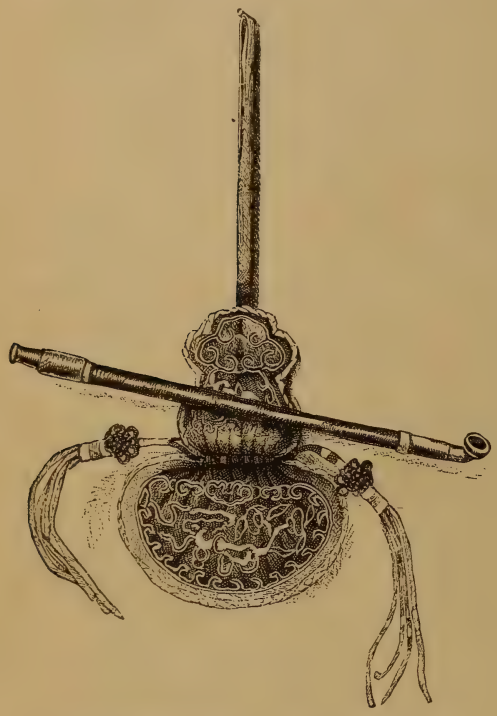
To gratify the general curiosity he explained that it represented the arms of the Polo family, one of the most noted of its time in Venice. "According to the first published account of Marco Polo's travels," said he, "the arms of the family consist of a blue shield, crossed with a bend or stripe bearing three birds.



The Doctor Abroad.

There is some dispute as to the kind of bird represented, but they are generally believed to be jackdaws. The emblem is by no means inappropriate," he continued ; "the jackdaw is a noisy bird, and certainly we must concede that Marco Polo has made a great deal of noise in the world."

During the smile that followed his slight attempt at a joke Henry consulted a memorandum that lay on the table before him. Then he called upon Frank Bassett who was seated directly in front of him to tell the Society who Marco Polo was.



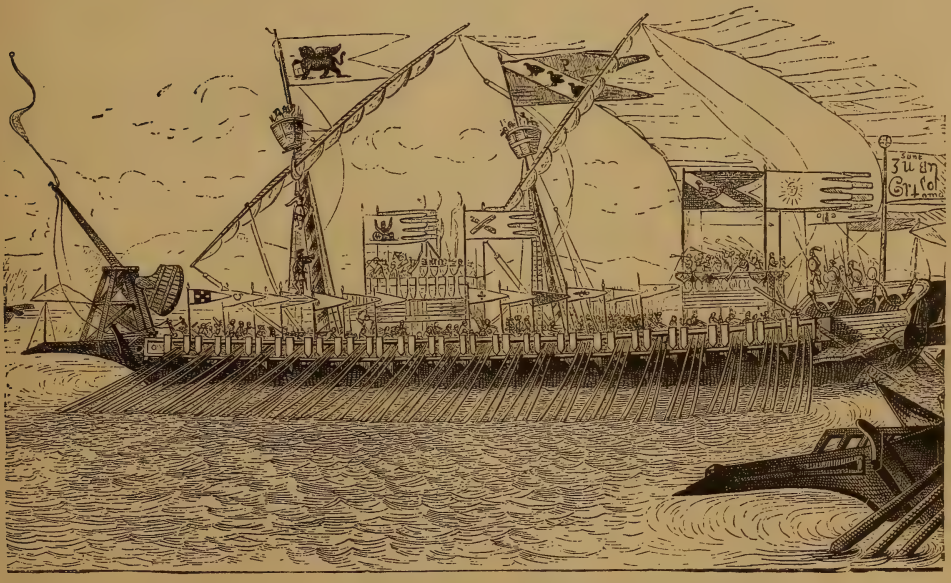
Mongol Pipe and Pouch in Dr. Allen's Collection.

Frank rose to his feet and drew from his pocket a roll of manuscript. He opened it somewhat nervously and began reading. At the start his voice was slightly tremulous, but in less than a minute he had recovered his composure and the tremor disappeared.

"Marco Polo," said he, "was a native of Venice, and was born about the year 1254. He was the son of Nicolo Polo, a rich merchant of that city, who had large transactions with the East. Those who are familiar with the history of Venice will remember that for several centuries she commanded much of the commerce between Europe and Asia, and her merchants became very wealthy. During the thirteenth century Venice was at the height of her prosperity and exercised great power over all surrounding people. About the time of Marco's birth his father, together with his uncle Maffeo, started on a trading voyage to

the East. According to the custom of the time they carried the products of Europe to exchange for those of Asia, and especially for diamonds and other precious stones. At Constantinople Nicolo and Maffeo Polo converted their goods into jewels, and then crossed the Black Sea to the Crimea; from the Crimea they went to Asia, and travelled overland to Bokhara.

"They lived several years in Bokhara, and then went to Cathay, where they were received with great honor by the Em-



Marco Polo's Galley Going into Battle.

peror Kublai Khan. He sent them on a mission to the Pope, and they returned to Europe after an absence which is variously stated at from fifteen to nineteen years. In 1271 they started again for Asia, taking young Marco with them.

"This was the beginning of the travels of Marco Polo; he did not return to his native city until the year 1295, and consequently his wanderings and adventures cover a period of nearly thirty years. After his return to Venice he was appointed to the

command of a ship in one of the wars between that republic and its rival Genoa. He was taken prisoner in a battle and carried to Genoa, where he remained five or six years. During his captivity one of his companions wrote down the story told by Marco; several copies were made of this wonderful narrative, and from one of the copies was printed the celebrated book of travels. He died at Venice in 1323.

"I have thus told you briefly who Marco Polo was," said Frank, as he folded his manuscript and was about to resume his seat. "He was, we may say, the most remarkable man of his time, but his work was not appreciated until long after his death. The stories he told about the countries of the East were not believed, but since his time they have nearly all been confirmed, and he is shown to have been a man of veracity. From all we can learn of him he was an honorable gentleman of a noble family of Venice, and never did any thing to its discredit."

As Frank sat down there was a round of applause which brought a blush to the face of the modest youth. When quiet was restored the President called upon Fred Bronson to tell them about Marco Polo's book.

"There have been," said Fred, who followed Frank's example and read from manuscript, "more than sixty printed editions of Marco Polo's travels. About half of these have appeared in English, while the rest are nearly equally divided between Germany, Italy, France, and Spain. The book has been translated into Russian, Swedish, Danish, and other continental languages, and there are not many modern works that have been so widely circulated. Seven editions have been printed in Latin, and I read in a newspaper quite recently that the book had been translated into Japanese.

"The book remained in manuscript for a hundred and fifty years after the death of Marco Polo. The first edition of it was published at Nuremberg, in 1477, and contains a portrait which is probably quite unlike the great traveller. During the following hundred years ten editions were printed in German, French,

Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian. The most important of these editions was by a Venetian named Ramusio ; his preface is dated July 7, 1553, and the book was in four large volumes. It is not worth our while to follow all the other editions that have been

Portrait of Marco Polo, from the First Printed Edition of his Book.

made, but we will come directly to modern times, from the earliest to the latest. A French author, Pauthier, published an elaborate edition in 1865, and claims to have followed one of the original

manuscripts of Marco Polo, or rather one that was personally revised by him."

Fred observed a puzzled expression on the faces of some of his auditors. Dropping his manuscript to his side he continued as follows :

"You must bear in mind that the art of printing from movable types was not invented until long after Marco Polo's travels, and consequently the books of his time were in manuscript. Some authorities credit him with introducing the art of printing into Europe by means of specimens of Chinese printing which he brought home from the East, but the claim rests on very slight foundation. He makes no mention of printing in any part of his book, and, therefore, we may conclude that he did not bring the art from Asia. Marco Polo died in 1323, while the first printing-press of which there is any authentic record was not constructed until 1438.

"There is some dispute as to the language in which the book was originally written. The work was done by Rusticien, of Pisa, a fellow-prisoner of Marco Polo during his captivity in Genoa, and after long and tedious discussions on the subject it has been generally decided that the book was written in French."

Fred paused a moment after making this statement and glanced in the direction of Dr. Allen. As he did so one of the younger members of the Society rose and asked Fred to explain why the book was written in French when the traveller and the writer were both Italians and would be likely to use their own language. Fred seemed puzzled for an answer, but the doctor came to his aid.

"Marco Polo was from Venice," said the doctor, "while Rusticien was from Pisa. The dialects of Pisa and Venice are quite different, and, besides, Marco had been so long in Asia that he might have forgotten a great deal of his mother tongue. Rusticien was a learned man for his time, and, besides, the French language had been carried to the East by the Crusaders,

and was spoken by a great many people not natives of France. It is very likely that the two prisoners found they could get along better in French than in their differing dialects of Italian, and so the book was made in it.

"It is not at all unusual," continued the doctor, "for persons of different countries to converse in a language which does not belong to either. I have seen a party of six nationalities—American, Russian, German, Italian, Spanish, and Turkish—conversing in French, and I have known Chinese from different provinces of China to resort to pidgin-English in order to understand each other. Once I talked with a Chinese mandarin on the frontier of Russia, and our dialogue passed through four translations. What I thought in my own language I said in French; it was then translated from French into Russian, from Russian into Mongol, and from Mongol into Chinese. Now if we had had a common language between us we could have got along without so much delay."

As the doctor sat down amid the smile that his last remark produced Fred returned to the consideration of his manuscript.

"The French edition of Pauthier in 1865 was an elaborate one with many notes, and it is decidedly the best of the editions in that language. Of the English editions the latest, and by far the best, is that of Colonel Yule; it was published in London in 1871, and a second and much larger edition was made in 1875. The title-page reads as follows:

THE BOOK

OF

SER MARCO POLO,

THE VENETIAN,

Concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels of the East.

NEWLY TRANSLATED AND EDITED, WITH NOTES, MAPS, AND OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY COLONEL HENRY YULE, C.B.,

LATE OF THE ROYAL ENGINEERS (BENGAL).

"The explanatory notes add greatly to the value of the book, and they are as numerous as they are interesting. The introduction fills a hundred and forty pages, and even in the rest of the book there is hardly a page without its foot-note. Sometimes the notes cover several pages together, and the preparation of the book must have given Col. Yule a great deal of hard work. He deserves all the honor it is in the power of this or any other geographical society to confer."

"In all I have to say of Marco Polo and his travels, I shall draw from Colonel Yule's work," continued the youth. "He may be safely considered the best authority on the subject, and I may find it convenient to use his very words at times without stopping to say so. To begin with, let me quote from the extracts he makes from the preface of the Italian edition which has already been mentioned. Ramusio names several noted geographers of ancient times and then says":

Of all that I have named, Ptolemy, as the latest, possessed the greatest extent of knowledge. Thus, toward the North, his knowledge carries him beyond the Caspian, and he is aware of its being shut in all round like a lake,—a fact which was unknown in the days of Strabo and Pliny, though the Romans were already lords of the world. But though his knowledge extends so far, a tract of fifteen degrees beyond that sea he can describe only as Terra Incognita; and toward the South he is fain to apply the same character to all beyond the Equinoxial. In these unknown regions, as regards the South, the first to make discoveries have been the Portuguese captains of our own age; but as regards the North and Northeast the discoverer was the Magnifico Messer Marco Polo, an honored nobleman of Venice, nearly three hundred years since, as may be read more fully in his own Book. And in truth it makes one marvel to consider the immense extent of the journeys made, first by the Father and Uncle of the said Messer Marco, when they proceeded continually toward the East-Northeast, all the way to the Court of the Great Can and the Emperor of the Tartars; and afterward again by the three of them when, on their return homeward, they traversed the Eastern and Indian Seas.

Nor is that all, for one marvels also how the aforesaid gentleman was able to give such an orderly description of all that he had seen; seeing that such an accomplishment was possessed by very few in his day, and he had had a large part of his nurture among those uncultivated Tartars, without any regular training in the art of composition. His Book indeed, owing to the endless errors and inaccuracies that had crept into it, had come for many years to be regarded as fabulous; and the opinion prevailed that the names of cities and provinces contained therein were all fictitious and imaginary, without any ground in fact, or were (I might rather say) mere dreams.

Howbeit, during the last hundred years, persons acquainted with Persia have begun to recognize the existence of Cathay. The voyages of the Portuguese also toward the Northeast, beyond the Golden Chersonese, have brought to knowledge many cities and provinces of India, and many islands likewise, with those very names which our Author applies to them; and again, on reaching the Land of China, they have ascertained from the people of that region (as we are told by Sign. John De Barros, a Portuguese gentleman, in his Geography) that Canton, one of the chief cities of that kingdom, is in 30⅔° of latitude, with the coast running N.E. and S.W.; that after a distance of two hundred and seventy-five leagues the said coast turns toward the N.W.; and that there are three provinces along the sea-board, Mangi, Zanton, and Quinzai, the last of which is the principal city and the King's Residence, standing in 46° of latitude. And proceeding yet farther the coast attains to 50°. Seeing then how many particulars are in our day becoming known of that part of the world concerning which Messer Marco has written, I have deemed it reasonable to publish his book, with the aid of several copies written (as I judge) more than two hundred years ago, in a perfectly accurate form, and one vastly more faithful than that in which it has been heretofore read. And thus the world shall not lose the fruit that may be gathered from so much diligence and industry expended upon so honorable a branch of knowledge.

"Ramusio then proceeds to compare the discoveries of Polo with those of Columbus and others, and very naturally gives the highest merit to his hero. Here is what he says of the difficulties of the journey":

And often in my own mind, comparing the land explorations of these our Venetian gentlemen with the sea explorations of the aforesaid Signor Don Christopher, I have asked myself which of the two were really the more marvellous. And if patriotic prejudice delude me not, methinks good reason might be adduced for setting the land journey above the sea voyage. Consider only what a height of courage was needed to undertake and carry through so difficult an enterprise, over a route of such desperate length and hardship, whereon it was sometimes necessary to carry food for the supply of man and beast, not for days only but for months together. Columbus, on the other hand, going by sea, readily carried with him all necessary provisions; and after a voyage of some thirty or forty days was conveyed by the wind whither he desired to go, whilst the Venetians again took a whole year's time to pass all those great deserts and mighty rivers.

"There are more comments upon the condition of geographical knowledge in Ramusio's time," continued Fred, "but it might be tedious for you to listen to them. The most interesting part of his narrative is the account of the return of the travellers to Venice and how they convinced their friends of their identity."

And when they got thither the same fate befell them as befell Ulysses, who, when he returned, after his twenty years' wanderings, to his native Ithaca, was recognized by nobody. Thus also those three gentlemen who had been so many years absent from their native city were recognized by none of their kinsfolk, who were under the firm belief that they had all been dead for many a year past, as indeed had been reported. Through the long duration and the hardships of their journeys, and through the many worries and anxieties that they had undergone, they were quite changed in aspect, and had got a certain indescribable smack of the Tartar both in air and accent, having indeed all but forgotten their Venetian tongue. Their clothes too were coarse and shabby, and of a Tartar cut. They proceeded on their arrival to their house in this city in the confine of St. John Chrysostom, where you may see it to this day.

The house, which was in those days a very lofty and handsome palazzo, is now known by the name of the *Corte del Millioni* for a reason that I will tell you presently. Going thither they found it occupied by some of their relatives, and they had the greatest difficulty in making the latter

Door-way of Marco Polo's House in the Corte Sabbionera at Venice.

understand who they should be. For these good people, seeing them to be in countenance so unlike what they used to be, and in dress so shabby, flatly refused to believe that they were those very gentlemen of the Ca' Polo whom they had been looking upon for ever so many years as among

the dead. So these three gentlemen devised a scheme by which they should at once bring about their recognition by their relatives, and secure the honorable notice of the whole city ; and this was it :—

They invited a number of their kindred to an entertainment, which they took care to have prepared with great state and splendor in that house of theirs ; and when the hour arrived for sitting down to table they came forth of their chamber all three clothed in crimson satin, fashioned in long robes reaching to the ground, such as people in those days wore within doors. And when water for the hands had been served, and the guests were set, they took off those robes and put on others of crimson damask, whilst the first suits were by their orders cut up and divided among the servants. Then after partaking of some of the dishes they went out again and came back in robes of crimson velvet, and when they had again taken their seats, the second suits were divided as before. When dinner was over they did the like with the robes of velvet, after they had put on dresses of the ordinary fashion worn by the rest of the company. These proceedings caused much wonder and amazement among the guests. But when the cloth had been drawn, and all the servants had been ordered to retire from the dining-hall, Messer Marco, as the youngest of the three, rose from table, and, going into another chamber, brought forth the three shabby dresses of coarse stuff which they had worn when they first arrived. Straightway they took sharp knives and began to rip up some of the seams and welts, and to take out of them jewels of the greatest value in vast quantities, such as rubies, sapphires, carbuncles, diamonds, and emeralds, which had all been stitched up in those dresses in so artful a fashion that nobody could have suspected the fact. For when they took leave of the Great Can they had changed all the wealth that he had bestowed upon them into this mass of rubies, emeralds, and other jewels, being well aware of the impossibility of carrying with them so great an amount of gold over a journey of such extreme length and difficulty. Now this exhibition of such a huge treasure of jewels and precious stones, all tumbled out upon the table, threw the guests into fresh amazement, insomuch that they seemed quite bewildered and dumbfounded. And now they recognized that in spite of all former doubts these were in truth those honored and worthy gentle-

men of the Ca' Polo that they claimed to be ; and so all paid them the greatest honor and reverence. And when the story got wind in Venice, straightway the whole city, gentle and simple, flocked to the house to embrace them, and to make much of them, with every conceivable demonstration of affection and respect. On Messer Maffio, who was the eldest, they conferred the honors of an office that was of great dignity in those days ; whilst the young men came daily to visit and converse with the ever polite and gracious Messer Marco, and to ask him questions about Cathay and the Great Can, all which he answered with such kindly courtesy that every man felt himself in a manner his debtor. And as it happened that in the story, which he was constantly called on to repeat, of the magnificence of the Great Can, he would speak of his revenues as amounting to ten or fifteen *millions*, of gold ; and in like manner, when recounting other instances of great wealth in those parts, would always make use of the term *millions*, so they gave him the nickname of MESSER MARCO MILLIONI : a thing which I have noted also in the Public Books of this Republic where mention is made of him. The Court of his House, too, at S. Giovanni Chrisostomo, has always from that time been popularly known as the Court of the Millioni.

As Fred paused after concluding his extract from Ramusio's narrative, one of his auditors asked if the house of Marco Polo can be seen to-day. Fred was unable to answer, as he had never been in Venice, but the doctor came to his relief.

"The house," said the doctor, "is pointed out to any one who asks for it. When I was first in Venice I told my guide I wished to see it, and he took me to a large building at the end of the Corte Sabbionera, which was formerly called the Corte del Millioni. He said it was the house of Marco Polo, and it answered the description of the '*Palazzo dei Polo*,' in one of the guide-books. The frame of the door is in the Arabic style of architecture, and above it there is a handsome Greek cross, evidently very old. According to tradition, Marco Polo was born and died in this house, and certainly no other building in Venice disputes the honor.

"There is another version," continued the doctor, "of the reception of the travellers on their return from the East. It is said that they were clad in rags, and when they had changed their old garments for new the wife of one of the Polos gave away the coat which her husband had discarded. He asked for it the next day, in order to take out the jewels which were sewn into it. When he learned that it had been given to a beggar he went to the bridge of the Rialto and stood there turning a wheel to no apparent purpose. People crowded around him and asked why he did this. His only answer was: 'He 'll come if God pleases.' All thought he was insane, and for two or three days there was constantly a crowd about him. At the end of that time he recognized his old coat on the back of a beggar, and bought it for a few pence. He recovered all his jewels, and with the proceeds of their sale built a fine house, which was occupied by the family for many years."

Dr. Allen sat down. Fred suggested that perhaps some one desired to ask a question relative to what he had told or read about Marco Polo and his history. The opportunity was embraced by one of the younger members of the society, who said he would like to know about the famous dinner given by the travellers to convince their relatives of their identity.

"You said something about water being served for the hands when the dinner was ready," remarked the youth, "and I did n't understand what was meant by it."

Fred looked inquiringly at the doctor, and the latter came at once to his aid.

"It is an Eastern custom," he remarked, "to serve water for the hands, not only before the commencement of a dinner but at intervals in its progress. Ramusio's manner of mentioning it would imply that it prevailed in Venice in his day, which is quite possible, in consequence of the intimacy which had grown up between that city and the East. In all Moslem lands you will still find the custom, and when you bear in mind the mode of eating you will see the necessity for it.

"I can best describe it by telling you of my first experience at an Oriental dinner. I was invited to dine with an Arab Sheik, and was told beforehand that there would be no knives or forks. Just before we sat down to the feast a servant brought a basin and with it a pitcher having a long spout. He poured the water on our hands, and it disappeared through a sort of colander in the bottom of the basin. When we had dried our hands we sat down at a low table, and then the eating began. The first course was roast lamb. The Sheik tore off pieces of the meat

Washing the Hands before Dinner.

and passed them to each of his guests, and we took them in our fingers. As soon as we were through with this part of the feast, the basins were brought to us again, and they were brought after each and every course. I had thought that the use of the fingers in place of our ordinary table utensils would spoil my appetite, but the perfect cleanliness resulting from the constant use of water prevented any unpleasant effect.

"It is quite possible," the doctor continued, "that the Polos

brought the custom with them from their long residence in the East, and introduced it at their banquet. The distribution of their dresses among the servants was after the Oriental manner, and was well calculated to impress the guests with the wealth of the entertainers."

"As long as the Polos were supposed to be poor they were not recognized by their relatives," said another member of the Society, "but when their wealth was exhibited they were acknowledged at once. I would like to ask if this custom was confined to Venice."

"I think not," replied the doctor, with a smile. "All ages and all countries can give parallels to the experience of the Venetian travellers in this particular. A man with millions can find an abundance of kinsmen, but let him be penniless nobody will claim relationship with him."

Other points in the proceedings of the evening were discussed, and before any one was aware of it the clock struck the hour for adjournment. A vote of thanks was unanimously given to Frank and Fred for their interesting recitals, and it was agreed that the Society should devote further time to the study of Marco Polo's book. The two youths were appointed to the work of making suitable extracts from the volume, and the rest of the Society was constituted a "Committee of the Whole" to ask questions or offer any explanations that might occur to them.

When this was determined the President rapped twice on the table and declared that the meeting was adjourned. Immediately after the adjournment Dr. Allen called the assemblage again to order, and said that for the convenience of consulting his books and maps he would offer the Society the use of his library until they had disposed of Polo's travels. The offer was promptly accepted with an earnest and heartfelt vote of thanks.

CHAPTER II.

Prologue to the Book—Travels of Marco's Father and Uncle—Journey to the Court of Kublai Khan—Interview with his Majesty—The Sojourn in Cathay—Returning after a Long Absence—Oriental Receptions.

At the next meeting of the Society Frank and Fred were called to the side of the President, who announced that the young gentlemen had been busy with the work entrusted to them and were provided with ample materials for the evening's entertainment. He hoped the other members of the Society had not been idle, and that each and all had made preparation to add to the general fund of information. Without further preliminaries he called upon Frank Bassett to read what he had prepared.

"The story of Marco Polo," said Frank, "has been variously divided by the writers who have undertaken to compile or edit it. Colonel Yule arranges it in a prologue and four books. The prologue tells how the elder Polos made their first journey to the court of the great Khan of Tartary and the circumstances of their second journey when accompanied by young Marco. The four books consist of a great many chapters, some very short and some very long, describing the sights, products, and manners of the countries of Asia, together with an attempt at their history, and the wars and government of Kublai Khan. A great part of this story of Oriental warfare is wearisome reading, and I shall exercise the editor's privilege of cutting it down. You will observe that the language of the book is sometimes in the first person and sometimes in the third. It is probable that Rusticien took the story of the great traveller as it was dictated, and afterwards attempted to write it out more fully. Doubtless the work was done at considerable intervals and with some carelessness, so that the form of writing at one time was not followed at another.

"With this explanation," said Frank, "we will take up the story as we find it." Then the youth read in a full clear voice, while his audience listened attentively:

THE

BOOK OF MARCO POLO.[1]

PROLOGUE.

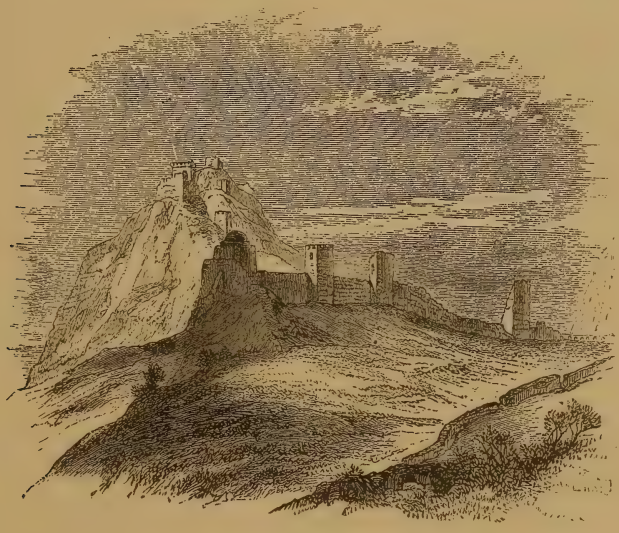
GREAT Princes, Emperors, and Kings, Dukes and Marquises, Counts, Knights, and Burgesses! and People of all degrees who desire to get knowledge of the various races of mankind and of the diversities of the sundry regions of the World, take this Book and cause it to be read to you. For ye shall find therein all kinds of wonderful things, and the divers histories of the great Hermenia, and of Persia, and of the Land of the Tartars, and of India, and of many another country of which our Book doth speak, particularly and in regular succession, according to the description of Messer Marco Polo, a wise and noble citizen of Venice, as he saw them with his own eyes. Some things indeed there be therein which he beheld not; but these he heard from men of credit and veracity. And we shall set down things seen as seen, and things heard as heard only, so that no jot of falsehood may mar the truth of our Book, and that all who shall read it or hear it read may put full faith in the truth of all its contents.

For let me tell you that since our Lord God did mould with his hands our first Father Adam, even until this day, never hath there been Christian, or Pagan, or Tartar, or Indian, or any man of any nation, who in his own person hath had so much knowledge and experience of the divers parts of the World and its Wonders as hath had this Messer Marco! And for that reason he bethought himself that it would be a very great pity did he not cause to be put in writing all the great marvels that he had seen, or on sure information heard of, so that other people who had

[1] The orthography of the text is according to Colonel Yule.—T. W. K.

not these advantages might, by his Book, get such knowledge. And I may tell you that in acquiring this knowledge he spent in those various parts of the World good six-and-twenty years. Now, being thereafter an inmate of the Prison at Genoa, he caused Messer Rusticiano of Pisa, who was in the said Prison likewise, to reduce the whole to writing; and this befell in the year 1298 from the birth of Jesus.

It came to pass in the year of Christ 1260, when Baldwin was reigning at Constantinople, that Messer Nicolas Polo, the father of my lord Mark, and Messer Maffeo Polo, the brother of Messer Nicolas, were at the



The Castle of Soldaia.

said city of CONSTANTINOPLE, whither they had gone from Venice with their merchant's wares. Now these two Brethren, men singularly noble, wise, and provident, took counsel together to cross the GREATER SEA on a venture of trade; so they laid in a store of jewels and set forth from Constantinople, crossing the Sea to SOLDAIA.

Frank paused and nodded to Fred. The latter rose immediately and announced that it had been left to him to make explanations of the text. In accordance with this arrangement his first duty would be to explain that the mention of Soldaia

gave the clue to the route which the two brothers followed in their first journey to the East. "In the time of Marco Polo," said he, "Soldaia was an important place of trade on the south-eastern shore of the Crimea. Ibn Batuta, an Arab historian, mentioned Sudak (the Arab name of Soldaia) as one of the four great ports of the world. It was captured by the Genoese in 1356, and they built a strong fortress there whose ruins exist to-day."

Frank then resumed his story.

Having stayed a while at Soldaia, they considered the matter, and thought it well to extend their journey farther. So they set forth from Soldaia and travelled till they came to the Court of a certain Tartar Prince, BARCA KAAN by name, whose residences were at SARA and at BOLGARA [and who was esteemed one of the most liberal and courteous Princes that ever was among the Tartars]. This Barca was delighted at the arrival of the Two Brothers, and treated them with great honor; so they presented to him the whole of the jewels that they had brought with them. The Prince was highly pleased with these, and accepted the offering most graciously, causing the Brothers to receive at least twice its value.

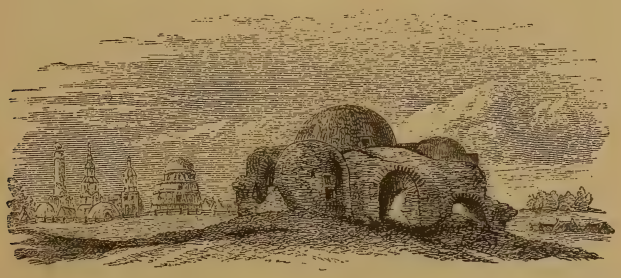
After they had spent a twelvemonth at the court of this Prince there broke out a great war between Barca and Aláu, the Lord of the Tartars of the Levant, and great hosts were mustered on either side.

But in the end Barca, the Lord of the Tartars of the Ponent, was defeated, though on both sides there was great slaughter. And by reason of this war no one could travel without peril of being taken; thus it was at least on the road by which the Brothers had come, though there was no obstacle to their travelling forward. So the Brothers, finding they could not retrace their steps, determined to go forward. Quitting Bolgara, therefore, they proceeded to a city called UCACA, which was at the extremity of the kingdom of the Lord of the Ponent; and thence departing again, and passing the great River Tigris, they travelled across a Desert which extended for seventeen days' journey, and wherein they found neither town nor village, falling in only with the tents of Tartars occupied with their cattle at pasture.

Fred was ready with his explanations, which he took up the moment Frank came to a pause.

"Barca Khan" said he, "was the grandson of the celebrated Genghis Khan who invaded Europe, as you have doubtless all read in history. Sara was a large and handsome city near the Volga River; it was partly destroyed by Tamerlane, and the destruction was completed by the Russians a hundred years later. Its ruins are pointed out near the modern city of Tzaritsin.

"Bolgara or Bolghar was the capital of what was then called Great Bulgaria, and stood near the Volga, about ninety miles below the present city of Kazan. In the thirteenth century it was one of the most northern towns in the world, and travellers



The Ruins of Bolghar.

went there to see the short summer night, just as they now go to the North Cape to see the midnight sun. An interesting fact about Bolghar is that it had a large trade in what we call 'Russia leather,' and this article is now known as *Bolgari* all through Northern Asia. Bolghar was long ago destroyed; the manufacture of Russia leather was continued by Kazan, which exports a great deal of it to the United States and other countries."

"I visited Kazan several years ago," said Dr. Allen, "and was much interested in the tanneries there. Several towns in the neighborhood of Kazan are largely engaged in tanning, and it was in one of them that an enterprising American succeeded in learning the process which he has since introduced in the United

States. Nowadays, when you buy something made of Russia leather, you must not feel certain that it was imported, as the American tanners are very skilful imitators."

As the doctor sat down, Fred explained further that Ucaca was a town on the right bank of the Volga, near the modern Saratov, and that there is a village called Uwek where the town formerly stood. The great river Tigris means the Volga, and the desert, which extended for seventeen days' journey, was only a part of the journey from Ucaca to Bokhara. In the time of our travellers it probably took not less than sixty days to traverse that distance.

Camp Scene in Bokhara.

Frank continued his reading :

After they had passed the desert, they arrived at a very great and noble city called Bocara, the territory of which belonged to a king whose name was Barac, and is also called Bocara. The city is the best in all Persia. And when they had got thither, they found they could neither proceed farther forward nor yet turn back again ; wherefore they abode in that city of Bocara for three years.

And whilst they were sojourning in that city, there came from Aláu, Lord of the Levant, Envoys on their way to the Court of the Great Kaan,

the Lord of all the Tartars in the world. And when the Envoys beheld the Two Brothers they were amazed, for they had never before seen Latins in that part of the world. And they said to the Brothers: "Gentlemen, if ye will take our counsel, ye will find great honor and profit shall come thereof." So they replied that they would be right glad to learn how. "In truth," said the Envoys, "the Great Kaan hath never seen any Latins, and he hath a great desire so to do. Wherefore, if ye will keep us company to his Court, ye may depend upon it that he will be right glad to see you, and will treat you with great honor and liberality; whilst in our company ye shall travel with perfect security, and need fear to be molested by nobody."

So when the Two Brothers had made their arrangements, they set out on their travels, in company with the Envoys, and journeyed for a whole year, going northward and northeastward, before they reached the Court of that Prince. And on their journey they saw many marvels of divers and sundry kinds, but of these we shall say nothing at present, because Messer Mark, who has likewise seen them all, will give you a full account of them in the Book which follows.

When the Two Brothers got to the Great Kaan, he received them with great honor and hospitality, and showed much pleasure at their visit, asking them a great number of questions. First, he asked about the emperors, how they maintained their dignity and administered justice in their dominions; and how they went forth to battle, and so forth. And then he asked the like questions about the kings and princes and other potentates.

And then he inquired about the Pope and the Church, and about all that is done at Rome, and all the customs of the Latins. And the Two Brothers told him the truth in all its particulars, with order and good sense, like sensible men as they were; and this they were able to do, as they knew the Tartar language well.

When that Prince, whose name was CUBLAY KAAN, Lord of the Tartars all over the earth, and of all the kingdoms and provinces and territories of that vast quarter of the world, had heard all that the Brothers had to tell him about the ways of the Latins, he was greatly pleased, and he took it into his head that he would send them on an Embassy to the

Pope. So he urgently desired them to undertake this mission along with one of his Barons; and they replied that they would gladly execute all his commands as those of their Sovereign Lord. Then the Prince sent to summon to his presence one of his Barons whose name was COGATAL, and desired him to get ready, for it was proposed to send him to the Pope along with the Two Brothers. The Baron replied that he would execute the Lord's commands to the best of his ability.

After this the Prince caused letters from himself to the Pope to be indited in the Tartar tongue, and committed them to the Two Brothers and to that Baron of his own, and charged them with what he wished them to say to the Pope. Now the contents of the letter were to this purport: He begged that the Pope would send as many as an hundred

The Great Khan Delivering the Tablet of Gold to the Brothers.

persons of our Christian faith; intelligent men, acquainted with the Seven Arts, well qualified to enter into controversy, and able clearly to prove by force of argument to idolaters and other kinds of folk, that the Law of Christ was best, and that all other religions were false and naught; and that if they would prove this, he and all under him would become Christians and the Church's liegemen. Finally he charged his Envoys to bring back to him some Oil of the Lamp which burns on the Sepulchre of our Lord at Jerusalem.

When the Prince had charged them with all his commission, he caused to be given them a Tablet of Gold, on which was inscribed that the three Ambassadors should be supplied with every thing needful in all the coun-

tries through which they should pass—with horses, with escorts, and, in short, with whatever they should require. And when they had made all needful preparations, the three Ambassadors took their leave of the Emperor and set out.

When they had travelled I know not how many days, the Tartar Baron fell sick, so that he could not ride, and being very ill, and unable to proceed farther, he halted at a certain city. So the Two Brothers judged best that they should leave him behind and proceed to carry out their commission ; and, as he was well content that they should do so, they continued their journey. And I can assure you, that whithersoever they went they were honorably provided with whatever they stood in need of, or chose to command. And this was owing to that Tablet of Authority from the Lord which they carried with them.

So they travelled on and on until they arrived at Layas in Hermenia, a journey which occupied them, I assure you, for three years. It took them so long because they could not always proceed, being stopped sometimes by snow, or by heavy rains falling, or by great torrents which they found in an impassable state.

"The prologue goes on to say," remarked Frank, "that the brothers travelled from Layas to Acre, where they arrived in the month of April, 1269, and learned that the Pope was dead. By the advice of the Legate (the representative of the Church) then at Acre, they went to Venice to wait for the selection of a new Pope, but in consequence of troubles in the Church they waited in vain for two years. Then, concluding that their mission could not be delayed any longer, they started on their return to the Great Khan, taking young Marco with them. While they were on their way, the Legate whom they had first met at Acre was chosen Pope. His name is not mentioned in the story, but a comparison of dates and incidents shows that he was Pope Gregory X. He supplied them with what they needed for their journey, including the oil from the lamp at Jerusalem, and appointed two priests to accompany them. When they reached Layas it was reported that a Saracen ruler

was invading Hermenia; the report alarmed the priests and they refused to go on, so that the three Polos continued without them.

"According to the prologue the journey to the court of the Great Khan consumed more than three years, owing to the bad weather and the severe cold they encountered. They found him at the great city of Kemenfu, of which we shall have more to say in another place. The book does not tell us whether they journeyed through Bokhara, which the elder Polos had previously visited. Bokhara was then and is now an important city of Central Asia, and it is easy to trace the route which the travellers followed. Hermenia is beyond doubt intended for Armenia, and Layas was its principal city. Fred will tell you more about it."

Portrait of Pope Gregory X.

"Layas," said Fred, "was better known as Ayas, and stood on the Gulf of Scanderoon at the north-eastern end of the Mediterranean. In the thirteenth century it was an important city and its ruins cover a large space. It had a castle which still remains, and the present village stands inside its walls. The trade which formerly went there is now centred at Alexandretta, the port of Aleppo, on the other side of the gulf."

"How would you go from Ayas to Acre?" one of the audience asked, "or rather how do you suppose the Polos went?"

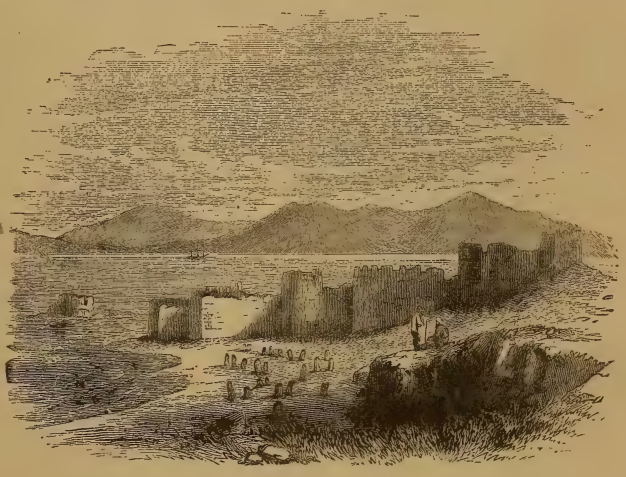
"If I were at Ayas to-day and wanted to go to Acre," responded the youth, "I should hire a sail-boat to take me across the gulf to Alexandretta. There I should find, once a week, a steamer which would carry me along the coast of Syria to Acre, touching at Latakieh, Tripoli, and Beyrout. But the Polos did not go in that way; they hired a ship for their

first voyage, and on the second they were provided with a galley by the king of Hermenia. The steamer makes the voyage in three or four days, including the stoppages at the ports on the way, while it is probable that the galley was not less than a month in accomplishing it."

"What is meant by the 'seven arts'?" inquired another.

"They represented the whole of a liberal education," was the reply, "and in classical times were supposed to mean, Rhetoric, Logic, Grammar, Arithmetic, Astronomy, Music, and Geometry. It was an elaboration," he continued, with a smile, "of what the country boy in the old anecdote calls the three R's — reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic."

"If this is a proper place for it," said another, "I would like to hear something about Kublai Khan."



The Castle of Ayas.

"You will hear much about his court and government in the story of Marco Polo's travels," was the reply, "but we may as well have something of his biography now. Kublai Khan was called in Chinese She-tsu, and also Hu-pe-li, and he is often mentioned in history as the Emperor or King of Cathay. He was the grandson of Genghis Khan, was born in the early part of the thirteenth century, and died in Peking in 1294. He was the king of what were known in history as the Western Tartars; the Chinese were suffering from the inroads of the Eastern Tartars, and about the year 1250 they asked the aid of the Western Tartars to repel the invaders. The desired aid was given, but the result was not what the Chinese had expected.

The Western Tartars took possession of the country, and in 1260 Kublai Khan proclaimed himself Emperor of China, and put aside the rulers whom he came to assist. From that time till his death he governed the empire with a great deal of wisdom, made many conquests, and proved himself one of the most intelligent monarchs of the century. It is said that at one time he ruled from the Arctic Ocean to the Straits of Malacca, and from the Yellow Sea to the Euxine."

Tartar Mandarin and Attendant.

"And now," said Fred, "we will hear from the famous book how the travellers were received at Kublai's court." This was the signal for Frank who proceeded to read from the prologue:

And what shall I tell you? When the Two Brothers and Mark had arrived at that great city, they went to the Imperial Palace, and there they found the Sovereign attended by a great company of Barons. So they bent the knee before him, and paid their respects to him, with all possible reverence, prostrating themselves on the ground. Then the Lord bade them stand up, and treated them with great honor, showing great pleasure at their coming, and asked many questions as to their welfare, and how they had sped. They replied that they had in verity sped well, seeing that they found the Kaan well and safe. Then they presented the credentials and letters which they had received from the Pope, which pleased him right well; and after that they produced the Oil from the Sepulchre, and at that also he was very glad, for he set great store thereby. And next, spying Mark, who was then a young gallant, he asked who was that in their company? "Sire," said his father, Messer Nicolo, "'t is my son and your liegeman." "Welcome is he too," quoth the Emperor. There was great rejoicing at the Court because of

their arrival; and they met with attention and honor from everybody. So they abode at the Court with the other Barons.

Now it came to pass that Marco, the son of Messer Nicolo, sped wondrously in learning the customs of the Tartars, as well as their language, their manner of writing, and their practice of war; in fact he came in brief space to know several languages and four sundry written characters. And he was discreet and prudent in every way, insomuch that the Emperor held him in great esteem. And so when he discerned Mark to have so much sense, and to conduct himself so well and beseemingly, he sent him on an ambassage of his, to a country which was a good six-months' journey distant. The young gallant executed his commission well and with discretion. Now he had taken note on several occasions that when the Prince's ambassadors returned from different parts of the world, they were able to tell him about nothing except the business on which they had gone, and that the Prince in consequence held them for no better than fools and dolts, and would say: "I had far liever hearken about the strange things, and the manners of the different countries you have seen, than merely be told of the business you went upon";—for he took great delight in hearing of the affairs of strange countries. Mark, therefore, as he went and returned, took great pains to learn about all kinds of different matters in the countries which he visited, in order to be able to tell about them to the Great Kaan.

When Mark returned from his ambassage he presented himself before the Emperor, and after making his report of the business with which he was charged, and its successful accomplishment, he went on to give an account, in a pleasant and intelligent manner, of all the novelties and strange things that he had seen and heard; insomuch that the Emperor and all such as heard his story were surprised, and said: "If this young man live, he will assuredly come to be a person of great worth and ability." And so from that time forward he was always entitled MESSER MARCO POLO, and thus we shall style him henceforth in this Book of ours, as is but right.

Thereafter Messer Marco abode in the Kaan's employment some seventeen years, continually going and coming, hither and thither, on the missions that were entrusted to him by the Lord, and sometimes, with

the permission and authority of the Great Kaan, on his own private affairs. And, as he knew all the sovereign's ways, like a sensible man he always took much pains to gather knowledge of any thing that would be likely to interest him, and then on his return to Court he would relate every thing in regular order, and thus the Emperor came to hold him in great love and favor. And for this reason also he would employ him the oftener on the most weighty and most distant of his missions. These Messer Marco ever carried out with discretion and success, God be thanked. So the Emperor became ever more partial to him, and treated him with the greater distinction, and kept him so close to his person that some of the Barons waxed very envious thereat. And thus it came about that Messer Marco Polo had knowledge of, or had actually visited, a greater number of the different countries of the World than any other man; the more that he was always giving his mind to get knowledge, and to spy out and inquire into every thing, in order to have matter to relate to the Lord.

When the Two Brothers and Mark had abode with the Lord all that time that you have been told, having meanwhile acquired great wealth in jewels and gold, they began among themselves to have thoughts about returning to their own country; and indeed it was time. For, to say nothing of the length and infinite perils of the way, when they considered the Kaan's great age, they doubted whether, in the event of his death before their departure, they would ever be able to get home. They applied to him several times for leave to go, presenting their request with great respect, but he had such a partiality for them, and liked so much to have them about him, that nothing on earth would persuade him to let them go.

Now it came to pass in those days that the Queen BOLGANA, wife of ARGON, Lord of the Levant, departed this life. And in her Will she had desired that no Lady should take her place, or succeed her as Argon's wife, except one of her own family, which existed in Cathay. Argon therefore despatched three of his Barons, by name respectively OULATAY, APUSCA, and COJA, as ambassadors to the Great Kaan, attended by a very gallant company, in order to bring back as his bride a lady of the family of Queen Bolgana, his late wife.

When these three Barons had reached the Court of the Great Kaan they delivered their message explaining wherefore they were come. The Kaan received them with all honor and hospitality, and then sent for a lady whose name was COCACHIN, who was of the family of the deceased Queen Bolgana. She was a maiden of seventeen, a very beautiful and charming person, and on her arrival at Court she was presented to the three Barons as the Lady chosen in compliance with their demand. They declared that the Lady pleased them well.

Meanwhile Messer Marco chanced to return from India, whither he had gone as the Lord's ambassador, and made his report of all the different things that he had seen in his travels, and of the sundry seas over which he had voyaged. And the three Barons, having seen that Messer Nicolo, Messer Maffeo, and Messer Marco were not only Latins, but men of marvellous good sense withal, took thought among themselves to get the three to travel with them, their intention being to return to their country by sea, on account of the great fatigue of that long land journey for a lady. And the ambassadors were the more desirous to have their company, as being aware that those three had great knowledge and experience of the Indian Sea and the countries by which they would have to pass, and especially Messer Marco. So they went to the Great Kaan and begged as a favor that he would send the three Latins with them, as it was their desire to return home by sea.

The Lord, having that great regard that I have mentioned for those three Latins, was very loath to do so, and his countenance showed great dissatisfaction. But at last he did give them permission to depart, enjoining them to accompany the three Barons and the Lady.

And when the Prince saw that the Two Brothers and Messer Marco were ready to set forth, he called them all three to his presence, and gave them two golden Tablets of Authority, which should secure them liberty of passage through all his dominions, and by means of which, whithersoever they should go, all necessaries would be provided for them, and for all their company, and whatever they might choose to order. He charged them also with messages to the King of France, the King of England, the King of Spain, and the other kings of Christendom. He then caused thirteen ships to be equipt, each of which had four masts

and often spread twelve sails. And I could easily give you all particulars about these, but as it would be so long an affair I will not enter upon this now, but hereafter, when time and place are suitable. Among the said ships were at least four or five that carried crews of two hundred and fifty or two hundred and sixty men.

And when the ships had been equipt, the Three Barons and the Lady, and the Two Brothers and Messer Marco, took leave of the Grand Kaan, and went on board their ships with a great company of people, and with all necessaries provided for two years by the Emperor. They put forth to sea, and after sailing for some three months they arrived at a certain Island toward the South, which is called JAVA, and in which there are many wonderful things which we shall tell you all about by and bye. Quitting this Island they continued to navigate the Sea of India for eighteen months more before they arrived whither they were bound, meeting on their way also with many marvels of which we shall tell hereafter.

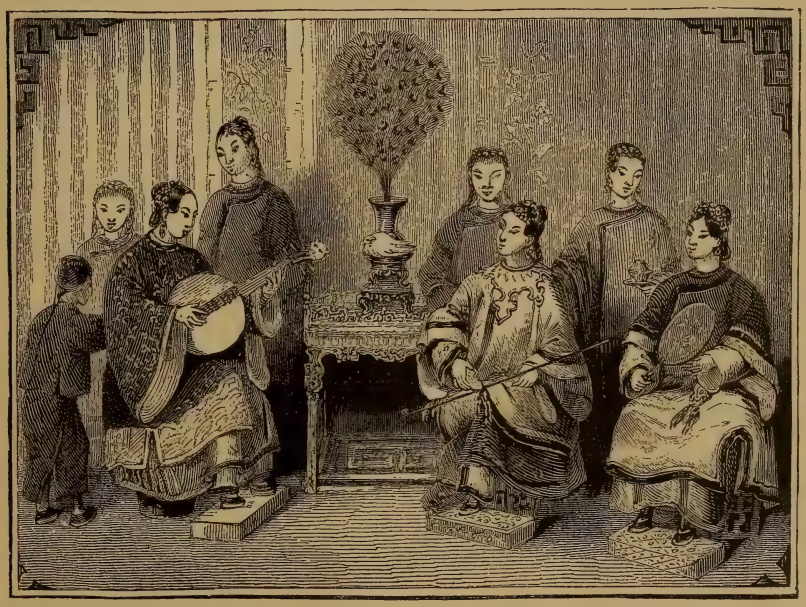
Ancient Chinese War Vessel.

And when they got there they found that Argon was dead, so the Lady was delivered to CASAN, his son.

But I should have told you that it is a fact that, when they embarked, they were in number some six hundred persons, without counting the mariners; but nearly all died by the way, so that only eight survived.

The sovereignty when they arrived was held by KIACATU, so they commended the Lady to him, and executed all their commission. And when the Two Brothers and Messer Marco had executed their charge in full, and done all that the Great Kaan had enjoined on them in regard to the Lady, they took their leave and set out upon their journey. And before their departure, Kiacatu gave them four golden Tablets of

Authority, two of which bore gerfalcons, one bore lions, whilst the fourth was plain, and having on them inscriptions which directed that the three Ambassadors should receive honor and service all through the land as if rendered to the Prince in person, and that horses and all provisions, and every thing necessary, should be supplied to them. And so they found in fact; for throughout the country they received ample and excellent supplies of every thing needful; and many a time indeed, as I may tell you, they were furnished with two hundred horsemen, more or less, to escort them on their way in safety. And this was all the more needful



A Group of Chinese Ladies.

because Kiacatu was not the legitimate Lord, and therefore the people had less scruple to do mischief than if they had had a lawful prince.

Another thing, too, must be mentioned, which does credit to those three Ambassadors, and shows for what great personages they were held. The Great Kaan regarded them with such trust and affection, that he had confided to their charge the Queen Cocachin, as well as the daughter of the King of Manzi, to conduct to Argon, the Lord of all the Levant. And those two great ladies who were thus entrusted to them they

watched over and guarded as if they had been daughters of their own, until they had transferred them to the hands of their Lord; whilst the ladies, young and fair as they were, looked on each of those three as a father, and obeyed them accordingly. Indeed, both Casan, who is now the reigning prince, and the Queen Cocachin, his wife, have such a regard for the Envoys that there is nothing they would not do for them. And when the three Ambassadors took leave of that Lady to return to their own country, she wept for sorrow at the parting.

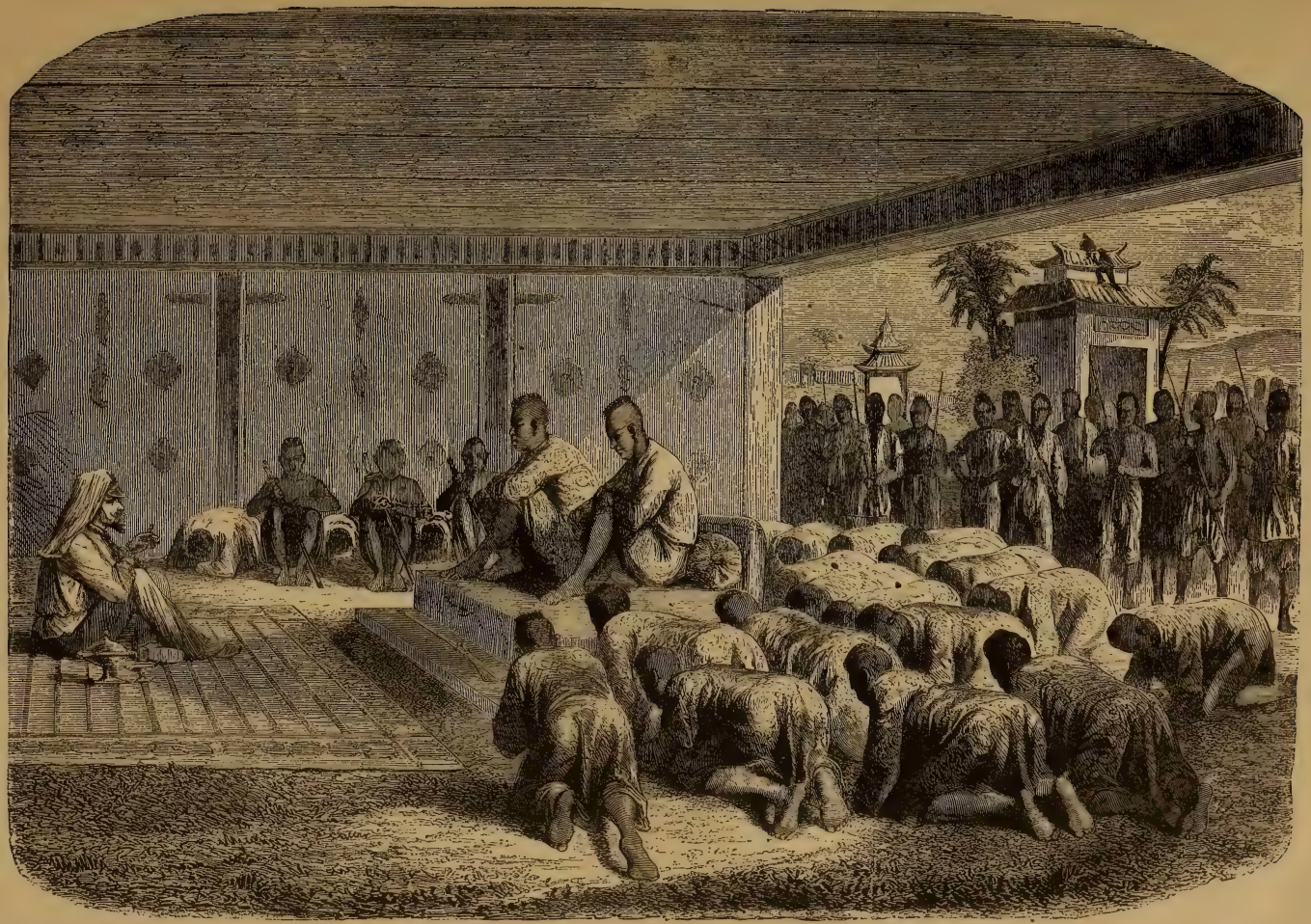
What more shall I say? Having left Kiacatu they travelled day by day till they came to Trebizond, and thence to Constantinople, from Constantinople to Negropont, and from Negropont to Venice. And this was in the year 1295 of Christ's Incarnation.

And now that I have rehearsed all the Prologue as you have heard, we shall begin the Book of the Description of the Divers Things that Messer Marco met with in his Travels.

Frank took his seat as he finished the prologue and the President announced that explanations and questions would be in order. No one seemed inclined to speak first, and after waiting a few minutes Fred rose to his feet and called attention to the ceremony at the reception of the travellers.

"You may have observed," said he, "that they prostrated themselves on the ground. I believe this custom still prevails in many parts of Asia, and especially in China."

"You are quite right," remarked Dr. Allen. "It is the Chinese idea that no one can come into the presence of the emperor except by creeping on all fours, in the attitude and manner of a whipped dog, and the custom is rigorously maintained so far as the natives of the country are concerned. When China began to have diplomatic relations with European countries she exacted the same conditions for the presentation of their ambassadors as for those of Asia; of course no European or American representative would humiliate himself in this manner, and the consequence was that for a long time the ambassadors were never presented to the emperor. It is not



Manner of Approaching an Oriental Prince.

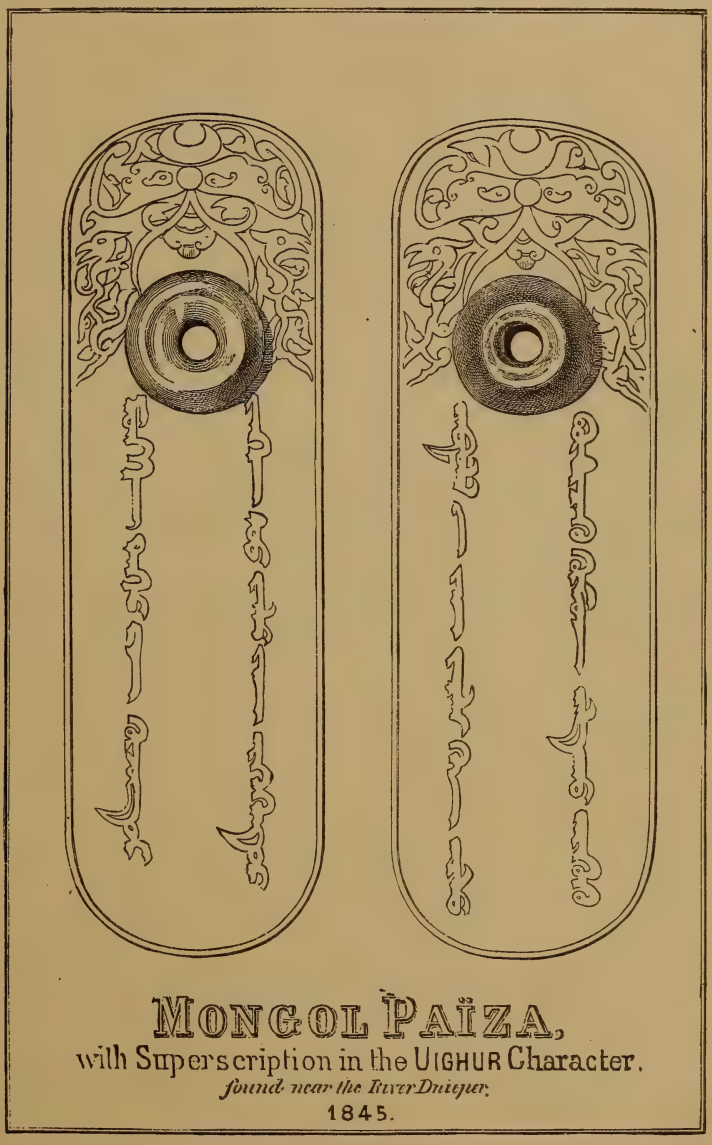
many years since the first presentation took place, and then the difficulty was overcome by arranging that the ambassadors should walk into the imperial audience hall and stand in a row in front of a curtain. The emperor would then take his place in his chair of state on the other side of the curtain, which was drawn aside as soon as all was ready. The ambassadors remained in their positions till the audience was ended and the curtain restored to its place.

"The enlightened rulers of Siam and Japan have abolished the old ceremony of creeping into their presence, and have adopted the manners of European courts. Other smaller sovereigns are following their example, and it is probable that even the conservative government of China may make a similar change before the end of the century."

"I observed," said one of the younger members, "that the prologue says the travellers doubted whether they would be able to return to their own country in the event of the emperor's death. What is meant by that?"

"It means," answered Fred, "that there was much jealousy of them among the other barons and great men at the court, and if the emperor should happen to die there would be no one to protect them. Besides it might turn out that his successor would not care to have foreigners about him, and an easy way of getting rid of them would be to kill them. Human life was of less consequence then than now, and even at the present time it is not held at a high value in China. Executions are ordered for trivial offences, and sometimes for no cause at all. It is no wonder that the three Venetians wanted to get away from the country, especially as they had obtained all the wealth they desired and had been so long absent from their families and homes. On the other hand, it is not surprising that the emperor desired to retain them in his service on account of the intelligence they had shown, and especially in consideration of the accounts which Marco gave him of all the countries he visited in the missions he undertook under the imperial orders."

"I wish," said another member of the Society, "we had a picture of one of the tablets which the emperor gave to the



An Oriental Tablet (Showing Both Sides).

travellers to secure them so much honor and respect on their

journey. I suppose they resembled an official diploma or commission, or were something like a 'reward of merit,' such as we get at school."

"That is true," Fred replied; "I have been reading on the subject, and here is a drawing of an Oriental tablet. According to the description it was about twelve inches long by four in width, and was stamped or engraved with the name of the sovereign who gave it. Near one end there was a hole strengthened by a ring; the tablet was suspended by a cord passing through this hole around the owner's neck, in about the same way that a medal is worn by a prize pupil in one of our modern schools.

"The tablets were the equivalents of the decorations which are given by modern sovereigns, and had the same effect in securing honor to the holders of them. When Marco Polo displayed the tablet which Kublai Khan had given him, he received the same distinction practically that is shown to the wearer of the Victoria Cross or the Star of the Legion of Honor. Perhaps, however, he received greater attentions, as decorations are far more numerous in our days than in those of the Emperor of Cathay."

"The king's messengers," said Dr. Allen, "were provided with tablets which they fastened to the bridles of their horses, and so could be recognized by any one they met on the road. At this day a traveller in Northern Asia carries a government passport, which entitles him to call for horses at the posting stations. Perhaps this custom is directly descended from the times of Kublai Khan, and if we should pursue the subject further we might find ourselves indebted more than we imagine to the great ruler of Cathay. But it is getting late, and I move we adjourn."

The motion was duly seconded and passed. Previous to declaring the session at an end the President announced that the next meeting would be devoted to the continuation of the story of Marco Polo.

CHAPTER III.

Marco Polo's Geographical Descriptions—Hermenia, Turcomania, Georgiania, Mausul, and Baudas—Strange Stories Concerning Those Countries—How a Great Miracle Was Wrought.

At the opening of the third meeting Frank announced that he had not divided the prologue into chapters as he found it in the published versions, but had treated it as a connected story. In reading what follows the prologue he intended to follow the same plan, but would preserve the headings of the chapters, and let them appear in the form of what the printers call sub-heads. Some of the chapters were very short, and reminded him of the famous one on the snakes of Ireland in a history of that country; others were of considerable length and would need to be abridged. Some of the less important chapters he would leave out altogether if he found the limited time would not permit an extended reading.

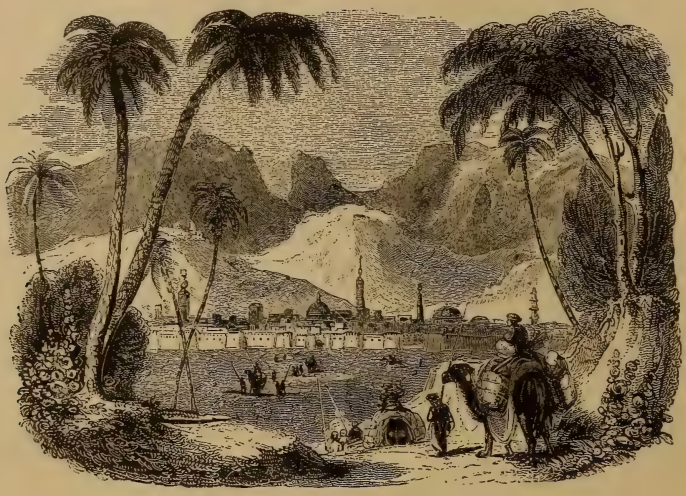
With this brief explanation he resumed the reading of the narrative.

BOOK I.

HERE THE BOOK BEGINS; AND FIRST IT SPEAKS OF THE LESSER HERMENIA.

There are two Hermenias, the Greater and the Less. The Lesser Hermenia is governed by a certain King, who maintains a just rule in his dominions, but is himself subject to the Tartar. The country contains numerous towns and villages, and has every thing in plenty; moreover, it is a great country for sport in the chase of all manner of beasts and birds. It is, however, by no means a healthy region, but grievously the reverse. In days of old the nobles there were valiant men, and did doughty deeds of arms; but nowadays they are poor creatures, and good

at nought. Howbeit, they have a city upon the sea, which is called LAYAS, at which there is a great trade. For you must know that all the spicery, and the cloths of silk and gold, and the other valuable wares that come from the interior, are brought to that city. And the merchants of Venice and Genoa, and other countries, come thither to sell their goods, and to buy what they lack. And whatsoever persons would travel to the interior (of the East), merchants or others, they take their way by this city of Layas.



A City of Armenia.

CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF TURCOMANIA.

In TURCOMANIA there are three classes of people. First, there are the Turcomans; these are worshippers of Mahommet, a rude people with an uncouth language of their own. They dwell among mountains and downs where they find good pasture, for their occupation is cattle-keeping. Excellent horses, known as *Turquans*, are reared in their country, and also very valuable mules. The other two classes are the Armenians and the Greeks, who live mixt with the former in the towns and villages, occupying themselves with trade and handicrafts. They weave the finest and handsomest carpets in the world, and also a great quantity of fine and rich silks of cramoisy and other colors, and plenty of other stuffs. Their chief cities are CONIA, SAVAST, and CASARIA, besides many

other towns and Bishops' Sees, of which we shall not speak at present, for it would be too long a matter. These people are subject to the Tartar of the Levant as their Suzerain. We will now leave this province, and speak of the Greater Hermenia.

"The description of Armenia," said Fred, as Frank paused at the end of the second chapter, "would answer very well for that country as it is to-day, except that it is under the Turkish Government instead of that of the Tartars. The city of Layas which has been mentioned already, is no longer in existence, its site being occupied by a few miserable huts scattered among the ruins. The Armenian merchants are among the shrewdest in the world, and they carry their commerce to Constantinople, Cairo,. and other cities of the East.

A Village in Turcomania.

"The Turcomans of the present time are almost identical with those of six hundred years ago. They are worshippers of Mohammed, and have great flocks and herds of sheep and cattle ; they have good horses, and are excellent riders, and they wander from place to place in search of pasturage. But the Turcoman carpets are not now the finest in the world, neither are their silks famous for their excellence. The Armenians and Greeks among the Turcomans seem to be less numerous than in Marco's time, and it is probably owing to their absence that the manufacturing industries of the country have declined. The Turcomans have a bad reputation, as they plunder their neighbors and waylay passing caravans. They are strict believers in the

commands of the Koran, and when a stranger has eaten bread and salt with them he can feel perfectly safe as long as he is under their care. But as soon as he is out of their protection they would have no hesitation in killing him for the sake of his goods, or if they doubted his adherence to their religion.

"Arminius Vambery in his 'Journey to Central Asia,'" Fred continued, "gives an account of his sojourn among the Turcomans. He says they are among the most cruel man-stealers and slave-owners in the world, but at the same time are honest

Turcomans Plundering a Caravan.

in their transactions with each other, and perform many acts of charity and kindness through religious promptings. The chief of the caravan with which Vambery travelled carried a supply of water to give to thirsty pilgrims, but he treated his slaves with the greatest brutality, and once proposed to leave Vambery to perish in the desert on the mere suspicion that he might be an unbeliever."

DESCRIPTION OF THE GREATER HERMENIA.

This is a great country. It begins at a city called ARZINGA, at which they weave the best buckrams in the world. It possesses also the best

baths from natural springs that are anywhere to be found. The people of the country are Armenians, and are subject to the Tartar. There are many towns and villages in the country, but the noblest of their cities is Arzinga, which is the See of an Archbishop, and then ARZIRON and ARZIZI.

The country is indeed a passing great one, and in the summer it is frequented by the whole host of the Tartars of the Levant, because it then furnishes them with such excellent pasture for their cattle. But in winter the cold is past all bounds, so in that season they quit this country and go to a warmer region, where they find other good pastures. [At a castle called PAIPURTH, that you pass in going from Trebizond to Tauris, there is a very good silver mine.]

And you must know that it is in this country of Hermenia that the Ark of Noah exists on the top of a certain great mountain, on the summit of which snow is so constant that no one can ascend; for the snow never melts, and is constantly added to by new falls. Below, however, the snow does melt, and runs down, producing such rich and abundant herbage that in summer cattle are sent to pasture from a long way round about, and it never fails them. The melting snow also causes a great amount of mud on the mountain.

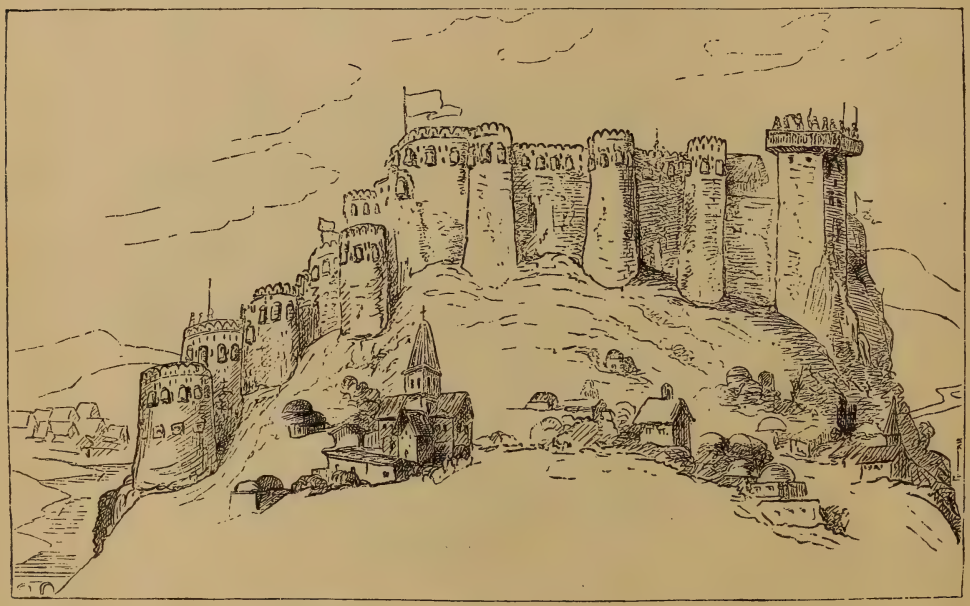
The country is bounded on the south by a kingdom called Mosul, the people of which are Jacobite and Nestorian Christians, of whom I shall have more to tell you presently. On the north it is bounded by the Land of the Georgians, of whom also I shall speak. On the confines towards Georgiania there is a fountain from which oil springs in great abundance, insomuch that a hundred ship-loads might be taken from it at one time. This oil is not good to use with food, but 't is good to burn, and is also used to anoint camels that have the mange. People come from vast distances to fetch it, for in all the countries round about they have no other oil.

OF GEORGIANIA AND THE KINGS THEREOF.

In GEORGIANIA there is a King called David Melic, which is as much as to say "David King"; he is subject to the Tartar. In old times all the kings were born with the figure of an eagle upon the right shoulder. The

people are very handsome, capital archers, and most valiant soldiers. They are Christians of the Greek Rite, and have a fashion of wearing their hair cropped, like Churchmen.

This is the country beyond which Alexander could not pass when he wished to penetrate to the region of the Ponent, because that the defile was so narrow and perilous, the sea lying on the one hand, and on the other lofty mountains impassable to horsemen. The strait extends like this for four leagues, and a handful of people might hold it against



A Georgianian Fortress. From a Drawing Dated 1634.

all the world. Alexander caused a very strong tower to be built there, to prevent the people beyond from passing to attack him, and this got the name of the IRON GATE. This is the place that the Book of Alexander speaks of, when it tells us how he shut up the Tartars between two mountains; not that they were really Tartars, however, for there were no Tartars in those days, but they consisted of a race of people called COMANIANS and many besides.

In this province all the forests are of box-wood. There are numerous towns and villages, and silk is produced in great abundance. They

also weave cloths of gold, and all kinds of very fine silk stuffs. The country produces the best goshawks in the world, which are called *Avigi*. It has indeed no lack of any thing, and the people live by trade and handicrafts. 'T is a very mountainous region, and full of strait defiles and of fortresses, insomuch that the Tartars have never been able to subdue it out and out.

There is in this country a certain Convent of Nuns called St. Leonard's, about which I have to tell you a very wonderful circumstance. Near the church in question there is a great lake at the foot of a mountain, and in this lake are found no fish, great or small, throughout the year till Lent come. On the first day of Lent they find in it the finest fish in the world, and great store too thereof; and these continue to be found till Easter Eve. After that they are found no more till Lent come round again; and so 't is every year. 'T is really a passing great miracle!

That sea whereof I spoke as coming so near the mountains is called the Sea of GHEL or GHELAN, and extends about 700 miles. It is twelve days' journey distant from any other sea, and into it flows the great River Euphrates and many others, whilst it is surrounded by mountains. Of late the merchants of Genoa have begun to navigate this sea, carrying ships across and launching them thereon. It is from the country on this sea also that the silk called *Ghellé* is brought. The said sea produces quantities of fish, especially sturgeon, at the river-mouths salmon, and other big kinds of fish.

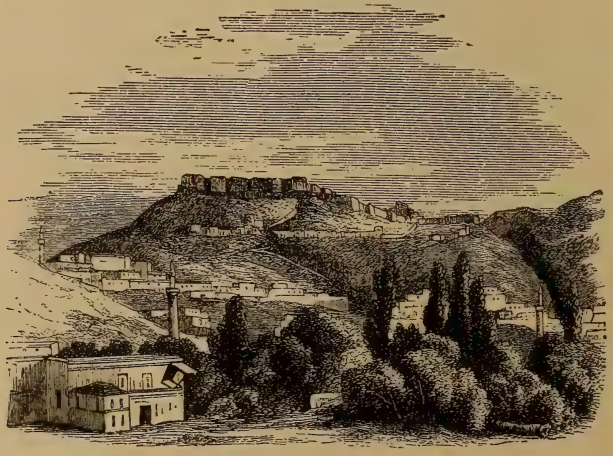
"Arzinga is the Erzingan of to-day," said Fred, as Frank paused. "The hot springs are not to be found, though they are said to exist in the mountains a few miles away, and as for the buckrams (coarse linen cloth), their weaving is no longer practised. But they are mentioned by writers two or three centuries later than Marco Polo, and it is reasonable to suppose he told the truth about them.

"Arziron is the modern Erzeroom, and Arzizi stands for Arjish, both well-known towns in Asiatic Turkey. Paipurth (the modern Baiburt), is on the road between Trebizond and Erzeroom, and has a castle which was blown up by the Russians in

1829. There are some mines of silver and lead a few miles away, and altogether the story of Marco is very easy to identify. The tradition that Noah's ark still rested on Mount Ararat prevailed in Marco's time and at a later period. It is probable that in his day the mountain had never been ascended, and there is no record of any one having reached the summit until 1829."

Some one interrupted the speaker to ask the height of Mount Ararat and who had first climbed it.

"The mountain is 16,953 feet in height," was the reply, "and the first person to stand on its summit was an English-



The Castle of Baiburt.

man named Parrot. A Russian engineer climbed it five years later, and since that time several travellers and surveyors have made the journey. The ascent is very fatiguing but the view from the top is said to be one of the finest in the world."

Fred having completed his brief account of Mount Ararat continued his observations upon the journey of the great Venetian.

"Georgiania is doubtless that part of Armenia now known as Georgia, from which the Turks are said to buy the most beautiful women for wives. Marco is cautious in speaking of the eagles upon the shoulders of the kings at the time of their birth; he

refers the phenomenon to 'old times' and does not claim it as belonging to his own day."

"Box-wood is what the engravers use for cutting pictures to

View of Derbend.

print in books, is it not?" one of the younger members of the Society inquired.

Fred was not prepared to answer, and consequently turned an inquiring look in Dr. Allen's direction.

"Yes," answered the doctor, "box-wood is the only material which answers the engraver's purpose, though many things have been tried as substitutes. Our best box-wood comes from Turkey, and probably from the very region visited by Marco. It is becoming scarce and dear; all the large trees have been cut and the forests will be exhausted at no distant day. Spain, France, and other European countries produce it, but the quality is inferior to that of the Turkish article."

"And now we come to the fish story," said Fred as the doctor concluded. "It was customary to tell marvellous legends about fish in those days as in ours, and Marco was not unlike the gentlemen who make wonderful catches of salmon and striped bass in the waters of the United States or Canada.

"The legend about the fish appearing only in Lent has been applied to lakes and rivers elsewhere, so we will not trouble ourselves about it. The great lake or sea which he mentions is the Caspian, but he is wrong when he makes the Euphrates flow into it. The iron gate of Alexander is the pass of Derbend; the Turks of to-day call it the *Demir-Kapi* or 'Iron Gate,' and a wall can be traced along the ridge of the Caucasus, which bears an Arab name equivalent to 'The Ramparts of Alexander.' There is another wall farther to the southeast, which is called by the same name, and was followed by Vambery for a considerable distance."

"Are there any other questions?" the president asked.

"Marco mentions a fountain of oil," said one of the audience. "Is there really such a fountain in Armenia?"

"He probably referred to the springs of petroleum on the western shore of the Caspian Sea," said Fred. "They are in the neighborhood of Baku, which you can find on the map, and have been known for thousands of years. Persia and Central Asia have long been supplied from Baku, and in the last few years speculators have developed the petroleum wells there, and are sending large quantities of the product all over Europe. The petroleum industry of the Caspian Sea promises to be a

formidable rival to the petroleum industry of the United States. By 'ship-loads' Marco probably meant 'camel-loads,' but if he were writing to-day he would be correct, as there are many steamers on the Black and Caspian seas and on the Volga River entirely occupied with the transportation of petroleum."

OF THE KINGDOM OF MAUSUL.

On the frontier of Hermenia towards the southeast is the kingdom of MAUSUL. It is a very great kingdom, and inhabited by several different kinds of people whom we shall now describe.

First there is a kind of people called ARABI, and these worship Mahommet. Then there is another description of people who are NESTORIAN and JACOBITE Christians. These have a Patriarch, whom they call the JATOLIC, and this Patriarch creates Archbishops, and Abbots, and Prelates of all other degrees, and sends them into every quarter, as to India, to Baudas, or to Cathay, just as the Pope of Rome does in the Latin countries. For you must know that though there is a very great number of Christians in those countries, they are all Jacobites and Nestorians; Christians indeed, but not in the fashion enjoined by the Pope of Rome, for they come short in several points of the Faith.

All the cloths of gold and silk that are called *Mosolins* are made in this country; and those great Merchants called *Mosolins*, who carry for sale such quantities of spicery and pearls and cloths of silk and gold, are also from this kingdom.

There is yet another race of people who inhabit the mountains in that quarter, and are called CURDS. Some of them are Christians, and some of them are Saracens; but they are an evil generation, whose delight it is to plunder merchants.

Near this province is another called MUS and MERDIN, producing an immense quantity of cotton, from which they make a great deal of buckram and other cloth. The people are craftsmen and traders, and all are subject to the Tartar King.

"It is hardly necessary to say," remarked Fred, "that by

Mausul is meant Mosool or Mosul, which you can easily find on the map. Dr. Allen has been there and can tell you about it."

"Mosool has not greatly changed since Marco Polo's time," said the doctor, who had been brought to his feet by Fred's observation. "It is on the right bank of the Tigris, about two hundred and twenty miles above Bagdad, and has a population of fifty thousand or more. Muslin derives its name from the city, which formerly supplied Europe with large quantities of that article. At present its fabrics are coarser than they used to be, and their reputation is gone. The bazaars of Mosool are

View in a Bazaar at Mosool.

large, and some of them are very handsome. There is one which has a high roof over a broad street, and forms a delightful lounging-place in a hot afternoon."

"Have n't I read that Mosool is near the ancient Nineveh?" inquired one of the younger members of the Society.

"Doubtless you have," the doctor answered. "The ruins of Nineveh are on the opposite side of the river, and there is a bridge of boats leading to it. I crossed on this bridge along with a caravan of camels, and reached the ruins of the ancient city in a ride of about an hour. There are mounds of rubbish and

broken stones covering several square miles of ground; the guide showed me where Layard and others had made excavations, and if you wish a full account of what was found there, I advise you to read Mr. Layard's book. This gentleman found the ruins of several palaces; the largest of them covered a hundred acres, and was said to have been built by Sennacherib nearly three thousand years ago. Marco was too busy with his commercial and other affairs to give any attention to Nineveh, and it is quite possible that he never heard of it

Bridge of Boats over the Tigris at Mosool.

"The population of Mosool at the present time resembles that which Marco describes. Though the city is under Turkish rule, nearly a fourth of the inhabitants are Christians, while the rest are divided among Turks, Arabs, Jews, and Kurds. The Kurds maintain their old reputation for robbery and treachery, and have not in any sense improved with age.

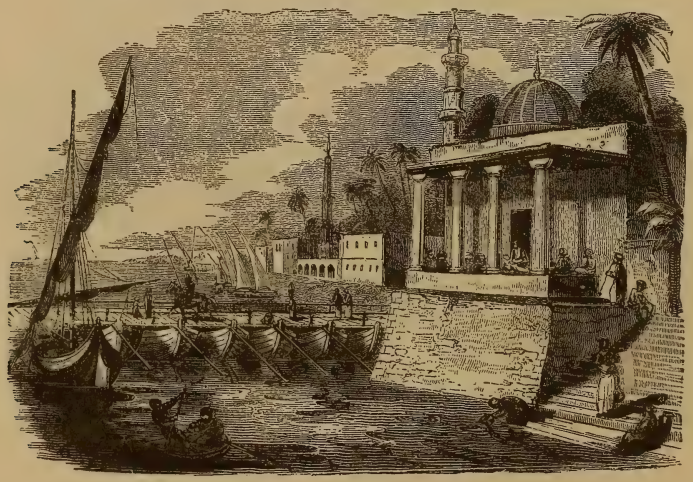
"Mus and Merdin still exist, but neither of them is of any consequence.

"And now," continued the doctor, "Frank will read Marco's account of Baudas, the modern Bagdad. By Bastra he means Basra or Bassarah, an important port near the mouth of the

Tigris. The usual way of going from Mosool to Bagdad is by boats or rafts on the river, but the upward journey generally follows the land. In some places the road is cut into the sides of the mountains and is very dangerous; accidents are not uncommon, and the robbers have an unpleasant way of attacking caravans and solitary travellers in these narrow defiles, where defence is very difficult or impossible."

OF THE GREAT CITY OF BAUDAS, AND HOW IT WAS TAKEN.

BAUDAS is a great city, which used to be the seat of the Calif of all the Saracens in the world, just as Rome is the seat of the Pope of all the



Bridge of Boats and Coffee-House at Bagdad.

Christians. A very great river flows through the city, and by this you can descend to the Sea of India. There is a great traffic of merchants with their goods this way; they descend some eighteen days from Baudas, and then come to a certain city called KISI where they enter the Sea of India. There is also on the river, as you go from Baudas to Kisi, a great city called BASTRA, surrounded by woods, in which grow the best dates in the world.

In Baudas they weave many different kinds of silk stuffs and gold brocades, such as *nasich*, and *nac*, and *cramoisy*, and many other beautiful

tissues richly wrought with figures of beasts and birds. It is the noblest and greatest city in all those regions.

Now it came to pass on a day in the year of Christ 1255, that the Lord of the Tartars of the Levant, whose name was Alaü, brother to the Great Kaan now reigning, gathered a mighty host and came up against Baudas and took it by storm. It was a great enterprise! for in Baudas there were more than 100,000 horse, besides foot soldiers. And when Alaü had taken the place he found therein a tower of the Calif's, which was full of gold and silver and other treasure; in fact the greatest accumulation of treasure in one spot that was ever known. When he beheld that great heap of treasure he was astonished, and, summoning the Calif to his presence, he said to him: "Calif, tell me now why thou hast gathered such a huge treasure? What didst thou mean to do therewith? Knewest thou not that I was thine enemy, and that I was coming against

Banks of the Tigris above Bagdad.

thee with so great an host to cast thee forth of thine heritage? Wherefore didst thou not take of thy gear and employ it in paying knights and soldiers to defend thee and thy city?"

The Calif wist not what to answer, and said never a word. So the Prince continued: "Now then, Calif, since I see what a love thou hast borne thy treasure, I will e'en give it thee to eat!" So he shut the Calif up in the Treasure Tower, and bade that neither meat nor drink should be given him, saying: "Now, Calif, eat of thy treasure as much as thou wilt, since thou art so found of it; for never shalt thou have aught else to eat!"

So the Calif lingered in the tower four days, and then died like a dog. Truly his treasure would have been of more service to him had he bestowed it upon men who would have defended his kingdom and his

people, rather than let himself be taken and deposed and put to death as he was. Howbeit, since that time, there has been never another Calif, either at Baudas or anywhere else.

Now I will tell you of a great miracle that befel at Baudas, wrought by God on behalf of the Christians.

HOW THE CALIF OF BAUDAS TOOK COUNSEL TO SLAY ALL THE CHRISTIANS IN HIS LAND.

There was a Calif at Baudas who bore a great hatred to Christians, and was taken up day and night with the thought how he might either bring those that were in his kingdom over to his own faith, or might procure them all to be slain. And he used daily to take counsel about this with the devotees and priests of his faith, for they all bore the Christians like malice. And, indeed, it is a fact, that the whole body of Saracens throughout the world are always most malignantly disposed toward the whole body of Christians.

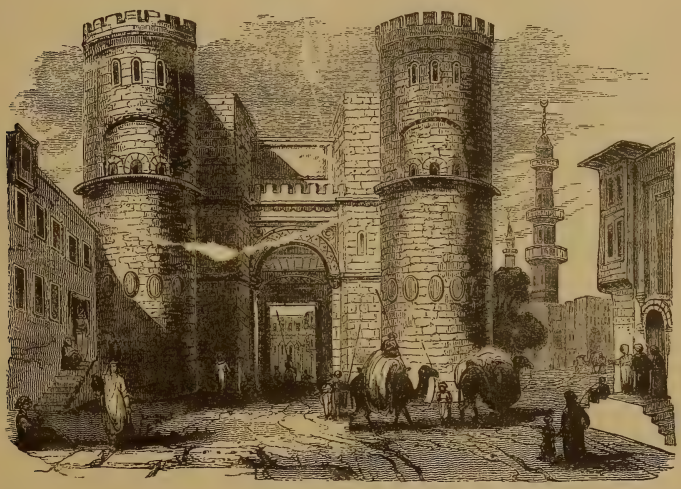
Now it happened that the Calif, with those shrewd priests of his, got hold of that passage in our Gospel which says, that if a Christian had faith as a grain of mustard seed, and should bid a mountain be removed, it would be removed. The Calif therefore called together all the Christians in his territories, who were extremely numerous. And when they had come before him, he showed them the Gospel, and made them read the text which I have mentioned. And when they had read it he asked them if that was the truth? The Christians answered that it assuredly was so. "Well," said the Calif, "since you say that it is the truth, I will give you a choice. Among such a number of you there must needs surely be this small amount of faith; so you must either move that mountain there"—and he pointed to a mountain in the neighborhood—"or you shall die an ill death; unless you choose to eschew death by all becoming Saracens and adopting our Holy Law. To this end I give you a respite of ten days; if the thing be not done by that time, ye shall die or become Saracens."

HOW THE CHRISTIANS WERE IN GREAT DISMAY BECAUSE OF WHAT THE CALIF HAD SAID.

The Christians on hearing what the Calif had said were in great dismay, but they lifted all their hopes to God their Creator, that He would

help them in this ' ait. All the wisest of the Christians took counsel together, an hem were a number of bishops and priests, but they had no res t to turn to Him from whom all good things do come, bese to protect them from the cruel hands of the Calif.

So they were all gath her in prayer, both men and women, for eight days and eight nig. id whilst they were thus engaged in prayer it was revealed in a visi a Holy Angel of Heaven to a certain Bishop who was a very good an, that he should desire a certain Christian Cobler, who had but ye, to pray to God; and that God in His goodness would grant su prayer because of the Cobler's holy life.



One of the Gates of Bagdad.

HOW THE ONE-EYED COBLER WAS DESIRED TO PRAY FOR THE CHRISTIANS.

Now when this vision had visited the Bishop several times, he related the whole matter to the Christians, and they agreed with one consent to call the Cobler before them. And when he had come they told him it was their wish that he should pray, and that God had promised to accomplish the matter by his means. On hearing their request he made many

excuses, declaring that he was not at all s[illegible] a man as they repre-sented. But they persisted in their reques[illegible] much sweetness, that at last he said he would not tarry, but do[illegible] lesired.

HOW THE PRAYER OF THE ONE-EYED [illegible]USED THE MOUNTAIN TO MO[illegible]

And when the appointed day wa[illegible], all the Christians got up early, men and women, small and gr[illegible]ore than 100,000 persons, and went to church, and heard the Hol[illegible]s. And after Mass had been sung, they all went forth together i[illegible]reat procession to the plain in front of the mountain, carrying th[illegible]cious cross before them, loudly singing and greatly weeping as they [illegible]t. And when they arrived at the spot, there they found the Calif with [illegible]ll his Saracen host armed to slay them if they would not change their f[illegible]ith; for the Saracens believed not in the least that God would grant su[illegible]a favor to the Christians. These latter stood indeed in great fear and doubt, but nevertheless they rested their hope on their God.

So the Cobler received the Bishop's benison, and then threw himself on his knees before the Holy Cross, and stretched out his hands toward Heaven, and made this prayer: "Blessed L[illegible] GOD ALMIGHTY, I pray Thee by Thy goodness that Thou wilt grant this grace unto Thy people insomuch that they perish not, nor Thy faith be cast down, nor abused nor flouted. Not that I am in the least worthy to prefer such request unto Thee; but for Thy great power and mercy I beseech Thee to hear this prayer from me Thy servant full of sin."

And when he had ended this his prayer to God the Sovereign Father and Giver of all grace, and whilst the Calif and all the Saracens, and other people there, were looking on, the mountain rose out of its place and moved to the spot which the Calif had pointed out! And when the Calif and all his Saracens beheld, they stood amazed at the wonderful miracle that God had wrought for the Christians, insomuch that a great number of the Saracens became Christians. And even the Calif caused himself to be baptized, and became a Christian, but in secret. Howbeit, when he died they found a little cross hung round his neck; and therefore the Saracens would not bury him with the other Califs, but put him

in a place apart. The Christians exulted greatly at this most holy miracle, and returned to their homes full of joy, giving thanks to their Creator for that which He had done.

And now you have heard in what wise took place this great miracle. And marvel not that the Saracens hate the Christians; for the accursed law that Mahommet gave them commands them to do all the mischief in their power to all other descriptions of people, and especially to Christians; to strip such of their goods, and do them all manner of evil, because they belong not to their law. See then what an evil law and what naughty commandments they have! But in such fashion the Saracens act, throughout the world.

"The story of the miserly Calif of Bagdad," said the doctor, "has been touched by many writers. Longfellow has done it into verse, which Fred will read."

Fred complied with the suggestion and read the following:

"'I said to the Kalif: Thou art old;
Thou hast no need of so much gold.
Thou shouldst not have heaped and hidden it here
Till the breath of Battle was hot and near,
But have sown through the land these useless hoards,
To spring into shining blades of swords,
And keep thine honor sweet and clear.

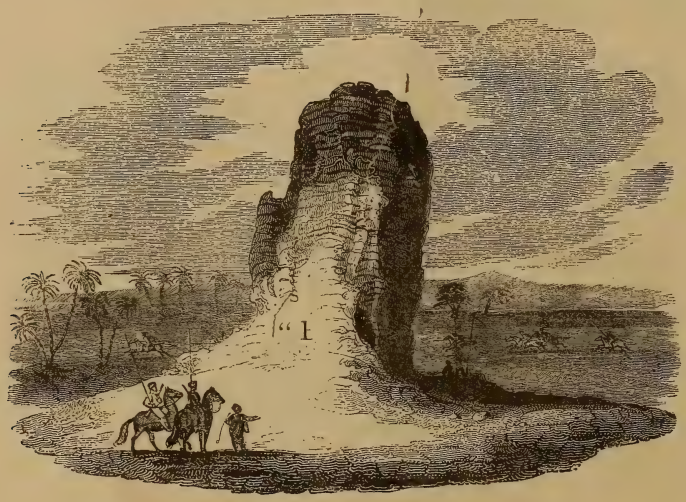
* * * * * *

Then into his dungeon I locked the drone,
And left him there to feed all alone
In the honey-cells of his golden hive:
Never a prayer nor a cry nor a groan
Was heard from those massive walls of stone,
Nor again was the Kalif seen alive.'

This is the story strange and true,
That the great Captain Alaü
Told to his brother, the Tartar Khan,
When he rode that day into Cambalu
By the road that leadeth to Ispahan."

"The miracle of the moving of the m[illegible]ntaid, which is in a Allen, "is an excellent specimen of the s[illegible]ries[illegible]ge. [illegible]old in those days. It was doubtless borrowe[illegible] from ve[illegible]e Moslems or from the mythology of India, which abounds in miracles performed by the heathen gods. I will give you one of these stories, by way of illustration, which is in the sacred books of India.

"A goddess in Ceylon was suffering one day with a headache, and it was decided that she could only be cured by rubbing with a plant that grew on one of the mountains of the Himalayas, two thousand miles away. A messenger was sent to bring the plant,

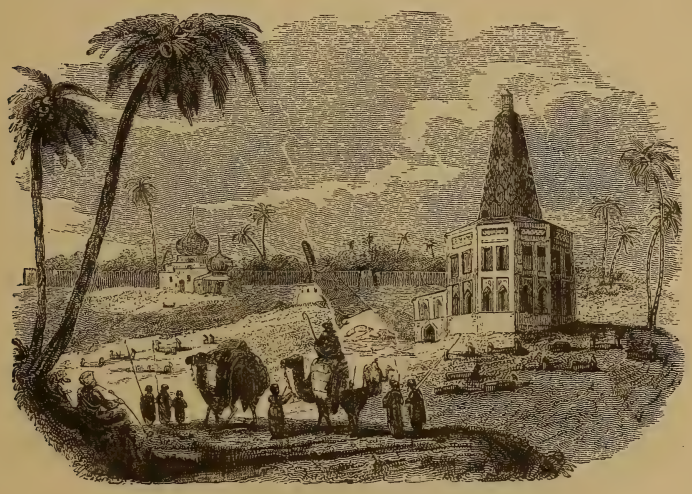


Tower of Nimrod, the Mighty Hunter.

and in three hours he had traversed the entire distance, and stood on the mountain. But it was night when he arrived there, and as he could not see the plant, he took the mountain on his shoulders and carried it to Ceylon; as soon as the plant had been obtained, he carried the mountain back again and had it in its place before morning. While crossing the plains of Central India he stumbled and came near falling with his burden. The people on the mountain thought it was an earthquake, but as he did not let the mountain fall to the ground they were not seriously disturbed. Several large stones were shaken off and fell on the

feet high, which is ey e to this day. If any one in conversation with Plain of Shina ubt the truth of the story, he is referred to the stones on the then as th convincing proof.

"But I promised to tell you about Bagdad. It is a city of about one hundred thousand inhabitants, lying on both banks of the Tigris, which is crossed by two bridges of boats. It was probably much larger in Marco's time than at present, as it was then the centre of a very important trade, and was famous for its manufactures; there is still a large commerce at Bagdad, and a



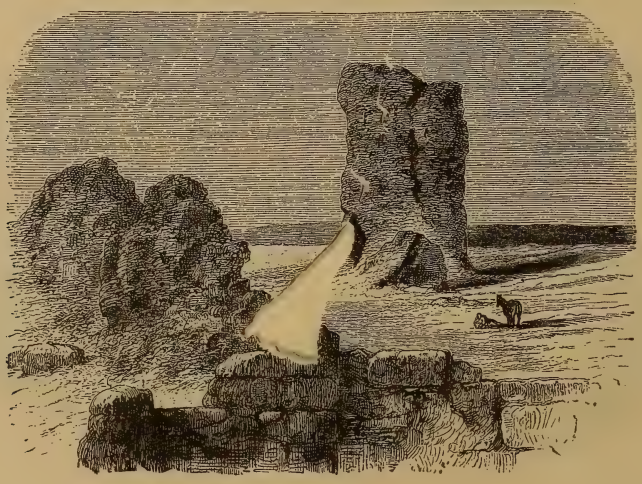
Tomb of Zobeida, Wife of Haroun al Raschid.

line of steamboats runs regularly between the city and the ports of the Persian Gulf, where they connect with ocean steamers running to India and Europe. A railway has been projected between Bagdad and the Mediterranean by way of Aleppo and Alexandretta, and perhaps some of you may travel by that route within a few years. Many of the stories of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments are located at Bagdad, and you have all read of the great caliph, Haroun al Raschid, who is the hero of some of the tales, and to whom the city owed much of its beauty and grandeur. One of the objects of interest near the city is the

tomb of Zobeida, the wife of Haroun al [illegible]sc[illegible] good state of preservation in spite of its g[illegible]eat [illegible]

"The bazaars of Bagdad are numero[illegible] and [illegible]y well stocked with goods; the picture of the Bazaar Mosool will answer for that of the principal bazaar of Bagdad, as they are both built on the same plan. The population is of the same general character as that of Mosool, and the city and district of Bagdad are ruled by a Pasha appointed from Constantinople.

"The ruins of Babylon are about fifty miles from Bagdad, and I could not resist the temptation to visit them, though the



Ruins of Babylon.

journey was said to be dangerous on account of robbers, and the heat on the plains between the Tigris and Euphrates is very great at the time of year when I was there. There is no carriage road, and I had the choice of riding on a camel or a horse. I chose the latter, and after crossing the Tigris we had a hard journey over the plain.

"The walls of the ancient city can be traced and the position of the celebrated Hanging Gardens has been identified by one of the explorers who has given considerable study to the subject. There is a mound of bricks and rubbish, a hundred and twenty

feet high, which is said to be the Tower of Babel; it stands on the Plain of Shinar and corresponds to the location given in the Bible. Then there is the Castle of Nimrod, 'The Mighty Hunter,' another mass of bricks not far from the city, but it is so much decayed that its original character can only be guessed.

"Babylon stood on both sides of the Euphrates, but the river has changed its course so that the ruins are several miles from its present banks. You will remember that Babylon has the credit of having originated printing, as the bricks of which her walls and palaces were built present the name of Nebuchadnezzar stamped into the clay at the time of moulding."

Tower of Babel and Plain of Shinar.

As the doctor spoke he turned to a cabinet at his side and brought from it a large brick of a yellowish color and about thirteen inches square by three and a half in thickness. "This," said he, "is one of the bricks of which the great palace of Babylon was built; the stamp on one side in Assyrian characters is the name of the famous king, and is the earliest specimen of printing or stamping of which we have authentic knowledge."

The brick was handed round and examined with great care, and in a little while returned to its place in the cabinet. It was in excellent condition, and showed that its makers understood

their business. The clay was evidently of the same kind as that from which the well-known "Milwaukee bricks" are manufactured.

During the examination of this relic of the great city of the Euphrates, Dr. Allen continued to talk about Bagdad and its peculiarities.

"For four months of the year," said he, "the climate is delightful; for another four months it is endurable; and for the rest of the year the heat is so great that the inhabitants take shelter in their cellars and do not venture out in the daytime. The thermometer goes to one hundred and twenty degrees in the shade, while in the sun it seems near the boiling point. Sometimes the Tigris overflows its banks and drowns a great many people, and sometimes the plague comes there and threatens to depopulate the city; in 1831 it killed four thousand people daily for nearly a week! But the most curious disease of Bagdad is the 'date-mark,' or 'Aleppo button.'"

"What is that?" asked several of the party, almost in the same breath.

"It is known through the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates and as far north as Aleppo. It comes once in a lifetime, and nearly every inhabitant of the country suffers from it. The cause of it is unknown; it is an obstinate but painless sore, either round or oval, and lasts for twelve months and no longer. With some persons it does not come until middle life or later, while others are attacked during their youth. Men from Europe have lived twenty years in the country without suffering from it, and on the other hand, travellers passing through hastily have been afflicted with the Aleppo button either during or after their journey. It leaves an indelible scar, which is of the color of a date at first, but afterward fades till it presents the same shade as the skin."

"Can't it be cured?" some one inquired.

"Yes," replied the doctor, "but curing it does very little good. It will heal after being burned several times with caustic, but it

breaks out somewhe else in a month or two and runs its course. I knew an Englishm n who had the sore cauterized and cured seven months after it broke out. Six weeks later it appeared in two places instead of one and lasted for five months. At the end of that time it healed of its own accord, and he had no further trouble."

"He did not make much by healing the wound," remarked the questioner, and in the laugh that followed his observation the meeting adjourned.

CHAPTER IV.

Persia and Its Divisions—Provinces and Cities, Ancient and Modern—The Parsees and Their Worship of Fire—How Persia Is Governed—Corruption of Officials—Stories of Enchantments—Dry Fogs and Dust-Storms—Oxen Trained to Trot.

THE next meeting was called to order promptly at the appointed hour. Before beginning to read, Frank explained that Tauris, which Marco was about to describe, is better known to-day as Tabreez. It is still a place of much importance, though less noted than in Marco's time; it has manufactories of silk and cotton goods, and its population exceeds a hundred thousand. In the fourteenth century it contained colonies of Venetian and Genoese merchants, but at present only a few Europeans live there. Its fruit gardens continue to be celebrated, its peaches and apricots being among the finest in the world. Some of its mosques are fine specimens of architecture, but most of them are sadly falling into ruin.

With this explanation he proceeded to read from the book.

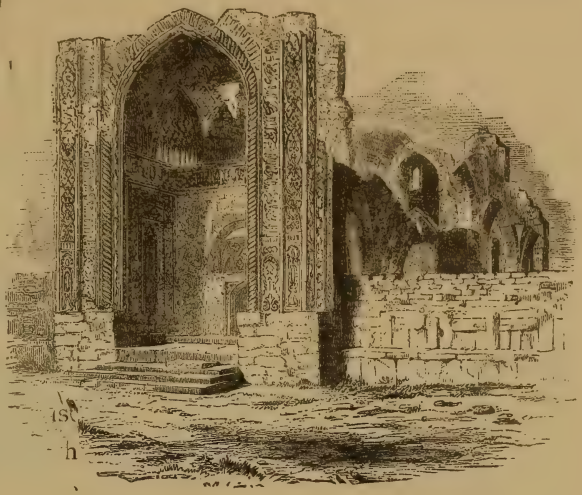
OF THE NOBLE CITY OF TAURIS.

TAURIS is a great and noble city, situated in a great province called YRAC, in which are many other towns and villages. But as Tauris is the most noble I will tell you about it.

The men of Tauris get their living by trade and handicrafts, for they weave many kinds of beautiful and valuable stuffs of silk and gold. The city has such a good position that merchandise is brought thither from India, Baudas, CREMESOR, and many other regions; and that attracts many Latin merchants, especially Genoese, to buy goods and transact other business there; the more as it is also a great market for precious stones. It is a city, in fact, where merchants make large profits.

The people of the place are themselves poor creatures, and are a great

medley of different classes. There are Armenians, Nestorians, Jacobites, Georgians, Persians, and finally the natives of the city themselves, who are worshippers of Mahommet. These last are a very evil generation; they are known as TAURIZI. The city is all girt round with charming gardens, full of many varieties of large and excellent fruits.



Doorway of a Ruined Mosque at Tabreez.

Now we will quit Tauris, and speak of the great country of Persia. From Tauris to Persia is a journey of twelve days.

"I thought Tabreez was a city of Persia," said one of the listeners, "but Marco speaks of a journey of twelve days from Tauris to Persia."

Persian Lady in Walking Dress.

"In Marco's time," said Frank, "Tabreez was a city of Armenia, but it fell into the possession of the Persians in 1730. It has been captured several times by the Turks and other invaders, and has suffered severely from earthquakes. In one earthquake eighty thousand persons are said to have perished, and all the large buildings were thrown down. Although a city of Persia, its inhabitants are principally Turks, and the Turkish language is generally spoken."

OF THE MONASTERY OF SAINT BARSAMO ON THE BORDERS OF TAURIS.

On the borders of (the territory of) Tauris there is a monastery called after Saint Barsamo, a most devout Saint. There is an Abbot, with many Monks, who wear a habit like that of the Carmelites, and these to avoid idleness are continually knitting woollen girdles. These they place upon the altar of St. Barsamo during the service, and when they go begging about the province (like the Brethren of the Holy Spirit) they present them to their friends and to the gentlefolks, for they are excellent things to remove bodily pain; wherefore every one is devoutly eager to possess them.

Persian Lady at Home.

OF THE GREAT COUNTRY OF PERSIA; WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF THE THREE KINGS.

PERSIA is a great country, which was in old times very illustrious and powerful; but now the Tartars have wasted and destroyed it.

In Persia is the city of SABA, from which the Three Magi set out when they went to worship Jesus Christ; and in this city they are buried, in three very large and beautiful monuments side by side. And above them there is a square building, carefully kept. The bodies are still entire, with the hair and beard remaining. Messer Marco Polo asked a great many questions of the people of that city as to those Three Magi, but never one could he find that knew aught of the matter, except that these were three kings who were buried there in days of old. However, at a place three days' journey distant he heard of what I am going to tell you. He found a village there which goes by the name of CALA ATAPERISTAN, which is as much as to say, "The Castle of the Fire-worshippers." And

the name is rightly applied, for the people there do worship fire, and I will tell you why.

They relate that in old times three kings of that country went away to worship a Prophet that was born, and they carried with them three manner of offerings, Gold, and Frankincense, and Myrrh; in order to ascertain whether that Prophet were God, or an earthly King, or a Physician. For, said they, if he take the Gold, then he is an earthly King; if he take the Incense he is God; if he take the Myrrh he is a Physician.

So it came to pass when they had come to the place where the Child was born, the youngest of the Three Kings went in first, and found the Child apparently just of his own age; so he went forth again marvelling greatly. The middle one entered next, and like the first he found the Child seemingly of his own age; so he also went forth again and marvelled greatly. Lastly, the eldest went in, and as it had befallen the other two, so it befel him. And he went forth very pensive. And when the three had rejoined one another, each told what he had seen; and then they all marvelled the more. So they agreed to go in all three together, and on doing so they beheld the Child with the appearance of its actual age, to wit, some thirteen days. Then they adored, and presented their Gold and Incense and Myrrh. And the Child took all the three offerings, and then gave them a small, closed box; whereupon the Kings departed to return into their own land.

Entrance to a Persian City.

WHAT BEFEL WHEN THE THREE KINGS RETURNED TO THEIR OWN COUNTRY.

And when they had ridden many days, they said they would see what the Child had given them. So they opened the little box, and inside it they found a stone. On seeing this they began to wonder what this might be that the Child had given them, and what was the import thereof. Now the signification was this: when they presented their offerings, the Child had accepted all three, and when they saw that they had said within themselves that He was the True God, and the True King, and the True Physician. And what the gift of the stone implied was that this Faith which had begun in them should abide firm as a rock. For He well knew what was in their thoughts. Howbeit, they had no understanding at all of this signification of the gift of the stone; so they cast it into a well. Then straightway a fire from Heaven descended into that well wherein the stone had been cast.

And when the Three Kings beheld this marvel they were sore amazed, and it greatly repented them that they had cast away the stone; for well they then perceived that it had a great and holy meaning. So they took of that fire, and carried it into their own country, and placed it in a rich and beautiful church. And there the people keep it continually burning, and worship it as a god, and all the sacrifices they offer are kindled with that fire. And if ever the fire becomes extinct they go to other cities round about where the same faith is held, and obtain of that fire from them, and carry it to the church. And this is the reason why the people of this country worship fire. They will often go ten days' journey to get of that fire.

Such then was the story told by the people of that Castle to Messer Marco Polo; they declared to him for a truth that such was their history, and that one of the Three Kings was of the city called SABA, and the second of AVA, and the third of that very Castle where they still worship fire, with the people of all the country round about.

Having related this story, I will now tell you of the different provinces of Persia, and their peculiarities.

"Saba," remarked Fred, "from which the three wise men are

said to have started on their journey, is the modern Savah, fifty miles southwest of Teheran. It is very much decayed, and so is Avah, about sixteen miles away. Modern travellers find no trace of the legend of the three wise men. The story seems to be a mixture of Christian and Persian character, and was told by an Arab writer nearly four centuries before Marco's time. There are no fire worshippers in that part of Persia at present."

One of the youthful auditors asked Dr. Allen to tell them something about the fire worshippers.

"The worship of fire is of very great antiquity," said the doctor, in response to the request for information, "and there is considerable doubt as to its origin. The Parsees or Fire-worshippers of the present time are descended from the followers of Zoroaster; very little is known about him, but the Persians generally attribute his existence to about six hundred years before our era. When Persia adopted the Moslem religion the Parsees were persecuted, and most of them adopted the new faith; those who clung to their old religion were finally allowed to settle in the most barren part of Persia, but the greater number of them emigrated to India. It is said there are less than ten thousand Parsees in Persia to-day, while there are nearly two hundred thousand in India, principally in the province of Guzerat and in Bombay. There are forty thousand Parsees in Bombay alone, and they are the most intelligent, wealthy, and enterprising of the native population. They have excellent schools and colleges, they contribute liberally to all the public charities, and there are several large hospitals in the city, open to everybody, which are entirely supported by Parsee merchants. When I visited Bombay I was introduced to many of the prominent Parsees, and was greatly pleased with their politeness and intelligence. Unlike most of the Oriental people, they believe in the education of women; I attended the graduating exercises at a Parsee school, and heard the boys and girls read their compositions and 'speak their pieces' exactly as I have heard the same exercises in American schools.

"Zoroaster is said to have brought the sacred fire from heaven, and his followers have never allowed it to go out. When the Parsees emigrated to India hundreds of years ago, they carried the fire with them, and it is kept burning on the altars of their temples. Priests watch constantly to see that it is not extinguished, and if by accident the fire goes out in one temple, it is brought from another exactly as in Polo's day. The Parsees do not bury their dead in the earth, nor consume them with fire as the Hindoos do. The bodies are exposed to be eaten by birds; on a hill overlooking Bombay are the famous 'Towers of Silence' where every Parsee of that city is carried after his death. Flocks of vultures are constantly around these towers, and they perform their work very quickly.

Parsee Lady and Boy.

"The Parsee merchants are found all through the great cities of Asia, and some of them are established in London, Paris, and other European cities. A few of their firms have branches or agencies in New York and San Francisco, but I believe none of the Parsees have come to America to live.

"Having heard about the fire worshippers," said the doctor,

"we will see what more our author has to say concerning Persia."

OF THE EIGHT KINGDOMS OF PERSIA, AND HOW THEY ARE NAMED.

Now you must know that Persia is a very great country, and contains eight kingdoms. I will tell you the names of them all.

The first kingdom is that at the beginning of Persia, and it is called CASVIN; the second is further to the south, and is called CURDISTAN; the third is called LOR; the fourth SUOLSTAN; the fifth ISTANIT; the sixth SERAZY; the seventh SONCARA; the eighth TUNOCAIN, which is at

Halt of a Caravan.

the further extremity of Persia. All these kingdoms lie in a southerly direction except one, to wit, Tunocain; that lies towards the east, and borders on the country of the Arbre Sol.

In this country of Persia there is a great supply of fine horses, and people take them to India for sale, for they are horses of great price, a single one being worth as much of their money as is equal to 200 livres Tournois; some will be more, some less, according to the quality. Here also are the finest asses in the world, one of them being worth 30 marks of silver, for they are very large and fast, and acquire a capital amble. Dealers carry their horses to Kisi and Curmosa, two cities on the shores

of the Sea of India, and there they meet with merchants who take the horses on to India for sale.

In this country there are many cruel and murderous people, so that no day passes but there is some homicide among them. Were it not for the Government, which is that of the Tartars of the Levant, they would do great mischief to merchants; and indeed, maugre the Government, they often succeed in doing such mischief. Unless merchants be well armed they run the risk of being murdered, or at least robbed of every thing; and it sometimes happens that a whole party perishes in this way when not on their guard. The people are all Saracens, *i. e.* followers of the Law of Mahommet.

In the cities there are traders and artizans who live by their labor and crafts, weaving cloths of gold, and silk stuffs of sundry kinds. They have plenty of cotton produced in the country; and abundance of wheat, barley, millet, panick, and wine, with fruit of all kinds.

CONCERNING THE GREAT CITY OF YASDI.

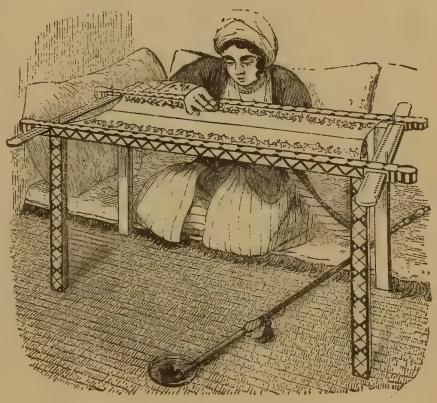
YASDI also is properly in Persia; it is a good and noble city, and has a great amount of trade. They weave there quantities of a certain silk tissue known as *Yasdi*, which merchants carry into many quarters to dispose of. The people are worshippers of Mahommet.

When you leave this city to travel further, you ride for seven days over great plains, finding harbor to receive you at three places only. There are many fine woods, producing dates, upon the way, such as one can easily ride through; and in them there is great sport to be had in hunting and hawking, there being partridges and quails and abundance of other game, so that the merchants who pass that way have plenty of diversion. There are also wild asses, handsome creatures. At the end of those seven marches over the plain you come to a fine kingdom which is called Kerman.

CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF KERMAN.

KERMAN is a kingdom which is also properly in Persia, and formerly it had a hereditary prince. Since the Tartars conquered the country the

rule is no longer hereditary, but the Tartar sends to administer whatever lord he pleases. In this kingdom are produced the stones called turquoises in great abundance; they are found in the mountains, where they are extracted from the rocks. There are also plenty of veins of steel and *Ondanique*. The people are very skilful in making harness of war; their saddles, bridles, spurs, swords bows, quivers, and arms of every kind are very well made indeed, according to the fashion of those parts. The ladies of the country and their daughters also produce exquisite needlework in the embroidery of silk stuffs in different colors, with figures of beasts and birds, trees and flowers, and a variety of other patterns. They work hangings for the use of noblemen so deftly that they are marvels to see, as well as cushions, pillows, quilts, and all sorts of things.



Manner of Making Embroidery.

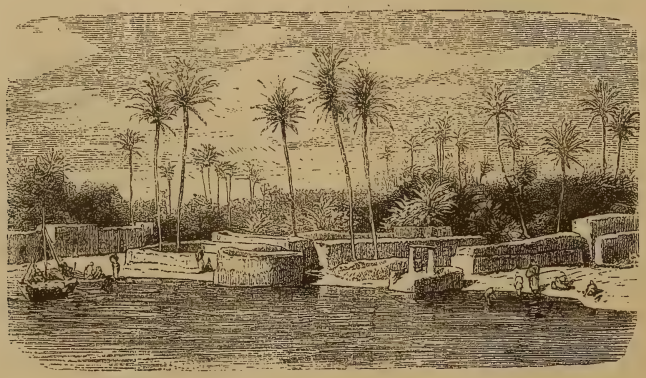
In the mountains of Kerman are found the best falcons in the world. They are inferior in size to the Peregrine, red on the breast, under the neck, and between the thighs; their flight so swift that no bird can escape them.

On quitting the city you ride on for seven days, always finding towns, villages, and handsome dwelling-houses, so that it is very pleasant travelling; and there is excellent sport also to be had by the way in hunting and hawking. When you have ridden those seven days over a plain country, you come to a great mountain; and when you have got to the top of the pass you find a great descent which occupies some two days to go down. All along you find a variety and abundance of fruits; and in former days there were plenty of inhabited places on the road, but now there are none; and you meet with only a few people looking after their cattle at pasture. From the city of Kerman to this descent the cold in winter is so great that you can scarcely abide it, even with a great quantity of clothing.

OF THE CITY OF CAMADI AND ITS RUINS; ALSO TOUCHING THE CARAONA ROBBERS.

After you have ridden down hill those two days, you find yourself in a vast plain, and at the beginning thereof there is a city called CAMADI, which formerly was a great and noble place, but now is of little consequence, for the Tartars in their incursions have several times ravaged it. The plain whereof I speak is a very hot region; and the province that we now enter is called REOBARLES.

The fruits of the country are dates, pistachioes, and apples of Paradise, with others of the like not found in our cold climate. There are



Scene in Southern Persia.

vast numbers of turtle-doves, attracted by the abundance of fruits, but the Saracens never take them, for they hold them in abomination. And on this plain there is a kind of bird called francolin, but different from the francolin of other countries, for their color is a mixture of black and white, and the feet and beak are vermilion color.

The beasts also are peculiar; and first I will tell you of their oxen. These are very large, and all over white as snow; the hair is very short and smooth, which is owing to the heat of the country. The horns are short and thick, not sharp in the point; and between the shoulders they have a round hump some two palms high. There are no handsomer creatures in the world. And when they have to be loaded, they kneel like the camel; once the load is adjusted, they rise. Their load is a

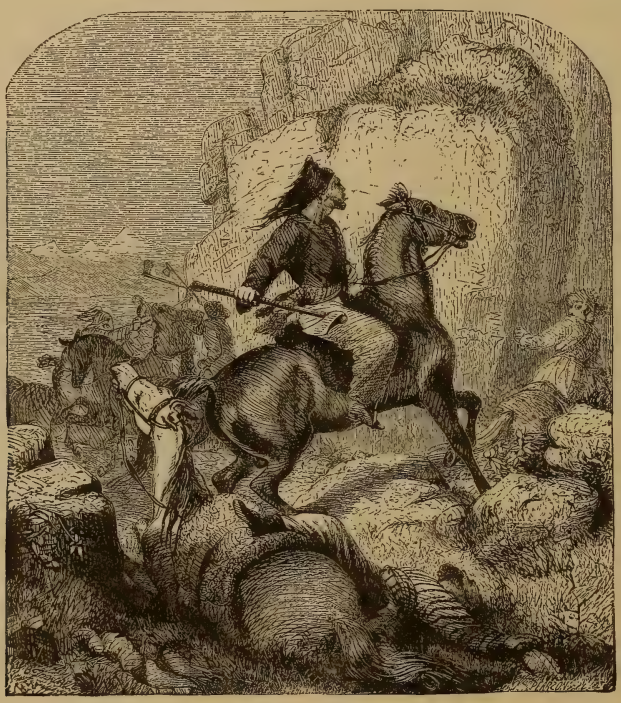
heavy one, for they are very strong animals. Then there are sheep here as big as asses; and their tails are so large and fat that one tail shall weigh some thirty pounds. They are fine fat beasts, and afford capital mutton.

In this plain there are a number of villages and towns which have lofty walls of mud, made as a defence against the banditti, who are very numerous, and are called CARAONAS. This name is given them because they are the sons of Indian mothers by Tartar fathers. And you must know that when these Caraonas wish to make a plundering incursion, they have certain devilish enchantments whereby they do bring darkness over the face of day, insomuch that you can scarcely discern your comrade riding beside you; and this darkness they will cause to extend over a space of seven days' journey. They know the country thoroughly, and ride abreast, keeping near one another, sometimes to the number of 10,000, at other times more or fewer. In this way they extend across the whole plain that they are going to harry, and catch every living thing that is found outside of the towns and villages; man, woman, or beast, nothing can escape them! The old men whom they take in this way they butcher; the young men and the women they sell for slaves in other countries; thus the whole land is ruined, and has become wellnigh a desert.

A Robber Chief.

The King of these scoundrels is called NOGODAR. This Nogodar had gone to the Court of Chagatai, who was own brother to the Great Kaan, with some ten thousand horsemen of his, and abode with him; for Chagatai was his uncle. And whilst there this Nogodar devised a most audacious enterprise, and I will tell you what it was. He left his uncle, who was then in Greater Armenia, and fled with a great body of horsemen, cruel, unscrupulous fellows, first through BADASHAN, and then through another province called PASHAI-DIR, and then through another

called ARIORA-KESHEMUR. There he lost a great number of his people and of his horses, for the roads were very narrow and perilous. And when he had conquered all those provinces, he entered India at the extremity of a province called DALIVAR. He established himself in that city and government, which he took from the King of the country, ASEDIN SOLDAN by name, a man of great power and wealth. And there abideth Nogodar with his army, afraid of nobody, and waging war with all the Tartars in his neighborhood.



Attack in a Mountain Pass.

Now that I have told you of those scoundrels and their history, I must add the fact that Messer Marco himself was all but caught by their bands in such a darkness as that I have told you of; but, as it pleased God, he got off and threw himself into a village that was hard by, called CONOSALMI. Howbeit he lost his whole company except seven persons who escaped along with him. The rest were caught, and some of them sold, some put to death.

Frank paused here, and Fred rose to comment upon what they had heard.

"According to the geographers," said he, "Persia was divided into seven or eight great divisions, as related by Marco, until about the beginning of this century. At that time it was decided to apportion the country into twenty-five provinces for purposes of administration, as the old divisions were found too large. Under the present arrangement the governors of the provinces are responsible to the general government and independent of

View in Kandahar, Persia.

each other. Tabreez, Kasbin, Ispahan, and Shiraz have successively enjoyed the honor of being the capital, a distinction which now belongs to Teheran.

"The government is one of the most despotic in the world," the youth continued, "and the statement of Polo that not a day passes without a homicide is as true now as in his time. The ruler of Persia is called the Shah or Padishah; he has the power of life and death over all his subjects, and can take possession of their property whenever he likes. When he is in want of money, he sends to the provincial governors and says how much he needs; they immediately levy a tax upon all the towns and

villages under their control, and if it is not promptly paid, they seize the property of the people and sell it. The local governors generally levy twice as much tax as has been called for, and the surplus is put into their own pockets. The governors get rich in a short time, and the people must suffer. If you wish to know in detail how things are managed in that country, I advise you to read 'Through Persia by Caravan,' by Arthur Arnold. The stories he tells of the corruption of officials and the necessity of giving bribes for the transaction of the most trivial matters read strangely to people accustomed to American or English ways.

Mountain Scene in Persia.

Every one connected with the government must make 'presents' to the Shah or his deputies, and very often the annual amount of these presents is greater than all the money raised by regular taxation in the same time.

"Persia is still famous for its horses,' continued Fred, "and they are exported to India as in Polo's time. They are known as 'Gulf Arabs,' and bring high prices; the best horses of Persia are those reared by the Turcomans, and are capable of great speed and endurance. Colonel Yule mentions one that travelled nine hundred miles in eleven days, and another that went eleven hundred miles in twelve days (two of them devoted to resting), consequently the horse covered eleven hundred miles of ground in ten days of travelling time! Of course, such cases are rare, but they indicate the great powers of the Persian horses."

Some one in the audience wished to know the value of the *livre Tournois*, in which the prices of these horses were reckoned.

"The *livre Tournois*, in Polo's time," Fred replied, "was equal to very nearly the English pound sterling of to-day. Two hundred *livres Tournois* would be about £193, or more than $950 of our currency."

"Horses in India cost a great deal of money," was the very natural comment upon Fred's explanation.

"You are quite right," said the doctor, "and they cost a great deal of money there now. In a general way we may say that horses in the cities of India are worth twice as much as the same grade of animals would be in New York or London. The country does not produce half nor a quarter enough horses for the needs of the people, and there is a steady stream of importation from Persia, Arabia, Australia, Burmah, and other countries. The Australian horses come principally from New South Wales, and are known as 'walers,' which has been corrupted into 'whalers.' When I was first in Calcutta, my attention was arrested by a placard announcing that a hundred 'whalers,' just arrived, would be sold at auction. I went at once to the place indicated for the sale, wondering what kind of a slave auction was to come off, and what the poor 'whalers' had done to be sold into captivity. I was relieved to find that the spot was nothing more than a horse market, and the subjects of the sale were quadrupeds instead of bipeds."

There was a pleasant laugh over the doctor's anecdote, and it doubtless served to fix in the minds of the listeners the technical name for Australian horses in Calcutta. When the audible smile was over Fred continued with his comment on the narrative.

"Yasdi is the modern Yezd," said Fred. "It is a city of about fifty thousand inhabitants, and the weaving of silk is carried on as in Polo's time. It is the home of most of the fire worshippers, or followers of Zoroaster, remaining in Persia; in 1859 it was said that there were eight hundred and fifty families of them in Yezd and the neighboring villages, but the number is diminishing every year. There is a good deal of commerce at

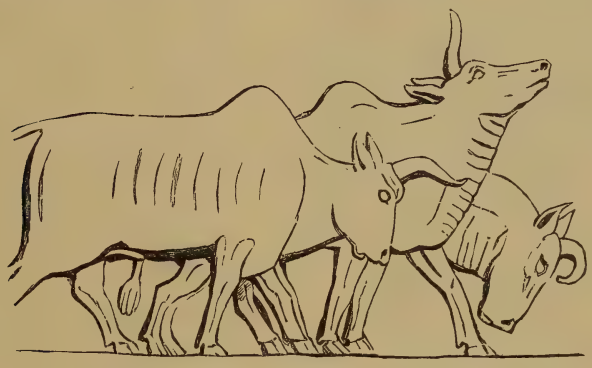
Yezd, and the merchants of that city go to India and to Europe in the prosecution of their business. The route from Yezd is correctly described by Polo as traversing plains, but the many fine woods he mentions have mostly disappeared. There are occasional groups of date-palms and other trees, and it is said that wild asses and other game abound in them, but you may ride for many miles together without seeing a single tree.

Embroidery with Figures of Animals.

"The Kerman of Polo is in existence to-day but is of little importance. There was formerly a mine of turquoises near Kerman, but it is not now worked. The same may be said of the mines of iron and of *ondanique*, which is a corruption of the name of steel in India. Indian steel was famous in Persia from very ancient times, and its importation continued until quite recently. The celebrated blades of Damascus and Khorassan were made of Indian steel, and the most wonderful stories are told of their qualities. It was said that a Damascus sword could cut a silk handkerchief in two while it was floating in the air, or cleave a helmet of European manufacture without turning the edge.

"Silk weaving and embroidery are still carried on at Kerman, and the work is equal to that of Northern India and Cashmere, though the material is less soft. Some of the shawls of Kerman are covered with figures of animals and flowers so delicately wrought that they almost need a magnifying glass for their inspection, and the carpets of Kerman and its vicinity have a high reputation for fineness of texture.

"The apples of Paradise are said by Colonel Yule to be nothing more than plantains. Dates and pistachios are abundant wherever the forests remain, and the *francolin* of Polo is what is called the black partridge in England. The humpbacked oxen of Persia are the same as those of India and similar



Humped Oxen from an Assyrian Sculpture.

to those that figure in the pictures on the walls of ancient tombs and temples in Egypt and Assyria."

"How about their kneeling to receive their loads?" one of the audience inquired.

"Mr. Abbott, a modern traveller, says they do so in this part of Persia," Fred answered, "and I believe he avers that he repeatedly saw them kneel to receive their burdens. There ought to be no great difficulty in teaching an ox to go upon his knees when a burden is about to be placed on his back, but the necessity is not as great as with a camel, in consequence of his diminutive height."

"I can tell you a more remarkable thing than this about the

oxen of the East," interrupted the doctor. "In Ceylon and parts of India I saw oxen trained to go at a trot, just as we have horses trot instead of walk. Of course they were not as fast as horses, but that an ox will trot at all and keep it up for any distance is a surprise to us who are accustomed to regard him as a model of slowness. I am well aware that when a herd of oxen is frightened it can get over the ground very fast and keep it up for a long distance. Remarkable stories are told of 'stampeded' herds on our Western plains, but we can hardly regard the speed of frightened animals as their natural pace."

Portrait of a Hazara.

"The fat-tailed sheep of Persia are well described by Marco," continued Fred, as soon as the doctor had concluded his observations on trotting oxen. "They abound in several parts of Asia and Africa and have been introduced into America, though not to any extent. The weight of the tail varies of course with the size of the sheep; the best specimens of the kind are at the Cape of Good Hope, where the tail alone has been found to weigh from seventy to eighty pounds."

There was a hum of incredulity through the audience at this assertion, and one of the youthful auditors asked how the animal could carry such a burden. Fred explained that when the tail of the sheep was of great weight it was supported on a board, and the shepherds of South Africa were in the habit of attaching small trucks to it so that it could be dragged about easily. He added that he would not vouch for the truth of the story, but

gave it as he had read it. "In Southern Tartary," he continued, "there is a sheep which has a very large rump, the fat hanging down in great masses on each side and completely concealing the tail, which is very short."

"Now we come," said Fred, "to a statement that seems to border on the marvellous, where the Caraonas are said to cause darkness by means of enchantments, so that they can carry on their plundering excursions. The phenomenon of dry fog or dust storms is doubtless what is referred to, and it was the practice of those times to ascribe to magic every thing that was not understood. It is of frequent occurrence in parts of Persia and in Northern India, and has often caused great inconvenience to caravans and single travellers. In a battle between two armies of Northern India in 1762, one of these fogs came on and completely enveloped all the combatants for several hours. The fighting continued, but the two forces were very much mixed up, and when the fog lifted both of them started in full retreat. Major St. John, who recently travelled in Persia, describes his experience of one of these fogs as follows: 'Not a breath of air was stirring, and the whole effect was most curious, and unlike any other fog I had ever seen. No deposit of dust followed, and the feeling of the air was decidedly damp.'

"The Caraonas were doubtless identical with the Hazaras of the present time, who are described accurately enough in Marco's account. They are robbers who make inroads into the territory of their neighbors, selling their captives into slavery and carrying away every thing that can be transported. It is on account of these fellows that most of the cities of Persia are surrounded by walls, and sometimes it is unsafe to venture outside their gates."

A brief discussion of some of the minor points of Marco's story followed Fred's explanation, and at its end the meeting adjourned.

CHAPTER V.

The Plain of Formosa—Hormos—Effects of the Simoom—Destruction of an Army by the Wind from the Desert—Countries of Northern and Eastern Persia—Comparison of Polo's Route with that of a Modern Traveller—The Great Heat of Persia—Fable about the Porcupine—The Old Man of the Mountain.

THERE was a full attendance at the next meeting of the Society, and it was evident that the course of readings was in every way popular. Frank opened the proceedings, by announcing that they would continue their journey through Persia and neighboring countries, under the guidance of the energetic Venetian, to whom they were already much indebted. With this explanation, he proceeded to read.

OF THE DESCENT TO THE CITY OF HORMOS.

The Plain of which we have spoken extends in a southerly direction for five days' journey, and then you come to another descent, some twenty miles in length, where the road is very bad and full of peril, for there are many robbers and bad characters about. When you have got to the foot of this descent you find another beautiful plain called the PLAIN OF FORMOSA. This extends for two days' journey; and you find in it fine streams of water with plenty of date-palms and other fruit-trees. There are also many beautiful birds, francolins, popinjays, and other kinds such as we have none of in our country. When you have ridden these two days you come to the Ocean Sea, and on the shore you find a city with a harbor which is called HORMOS. Merchants come thither from India, with ships loaded with spicery and precious stones, pearls, cloths of silk and gold, elephants' teeth, and many other wares, which they sell to the merchants of Hormos, and which these in turn carry all over the world to dispose of again. In fact, 't is a city of immense trade. There are plenty of towns and villages under it, but it is the capital. The King is called

RUOMEDAM AHOMET. It is a very sickly place, and the heat of the sun is tremendous, If any foreign merchant dies there, the King takes all his property.

In this country they ake a wine of dates mixt with spices, which is very good. The peo never eat meat and wheaten bread except when they are ill, and if take such food when they are in health it makes them ill. Their fo when in health, consists of dates and salt-fish—tunny, to wit—and c s, and this kind of diet they maintain in order to preserve their hea

Their ships are wretche irs, and many of them get lost; for they have no iron fastenings, ar only stitched together with twine made

Merchants and Camels at a Wayside Fountain.

from the husk of the Indian nut. They beat this husk until it becomes like horse-hair, and from that they spin twine, and with this stitch the planks of the ships together. It keeps well and is not corroded by the sea-water, but it will not stand well in a storm. The ships are not pitched, but are rubbed with fish-oil. They have one mast, one sail, and one rudder, and have no deck, but only a cover spread over the cargo when loaded. This cover consists of hides, and on the top of these hides they put the horses which they take to India for sale. They have no iron to

make nails of, and for this reason they use only wooden treenails in their shipbuilding, and then stitch the planks with twine as I have told you. Hence, 't is a perilous business to go a voyage in one of those ships, and many of them are lost, for in that Sea of India the storms are often terrible.

The people are black, and are worshippers of Mahommet. The residents avoid living in the cities, for the heat in summer is so great that it would kill them. Hence, they go out to keep at their gardens in the country, where there are streams and plenty of water. For all that they

A Sand-Storm in the Desert.

would not escape but for one thing that I will mention. The fact is, you see, that in summer a wind often blows across the sands which encompass the plain, so intolerably hot that it would kill everybody, were it not that when they perceive that wind coming they plunge into water up to the neck, and so abide until the wind has ceased. And to prove the great heat of this wind, Messer Mark related a case that befel when he was there. The Lord of Hormos, not having paid his tribute to the King of Kerman, the latter resolved to claim it at the time when the people of Hormos were residing away from the city. So he caused a force of 1,600

horse and 5,000 foot to be got ready, and sent them by the route of Reobarles to take the othe[illegible] by surprise. Now, it happened one day that through the fault of the [illegible]uide they were not able to reach the place appointed for their night's [illegible]t, and were obliged to bivouac in a wilderness not far from Hormos. [illegible]the morning as they were starting on their march they were caught [illegible]at wind, and every man of them was suffocated, so that not one surv[illegible] to carry the tidings to their Lord. When the people of Hormos he[illegible] this they went forth to bury the bodies lest they should breed a pe[illegible]ce. But when they laid hold of them by the arms to drag them to th[illegible], the bodies proved to be so *baked*, as it were, by that tremendous h[illegible]at the arms parted from the trunks, and in the end the people had t[illegible]raves hard by each where it lay, and so cast them in.

The people sow their whea[illegible] barley and other corn in the month of Novembe[illegible], and reap it in the mon[illegible]h of March. The dates are not gathered till May, but otherwise there is no grass nor any other green thing, for the excessive heat dries up every thing.

When any one dies they make a great business of the mourning, for women mourn their husbands for four years. During that time they mourn at least once a day, gathering together their kinsfolk and friends and neighbors for the purpose, and making a great weeping and wailing. And they have women who are mourners by trade, and do it for hire.

Now, we will quit this country. I shall not, however, now go on to tell you about India; but when time and place shall suit we shall come round from the north and tell you about it. For the present, let us return by another road to the aforesaid city of Kerman, for we cannot get at those countries that I wish to tell you about except through that city.

On the road by which we return from Hormos to Kerman you meet with some very fine plains, and you also find many natural hot baths; you find plenty of partridges on the road; and there are towns where victual is cheap and abundant, with quantities of dates and other fruits. The wheaten bread, however, is so bitter, owing to the bitterness of the water, that no one can eat it who is not used to it. The baths that I mentioned have excellent virtues; they cure the itch and several other diseases.

OF THE WEARISOME AND DESERT ROAD THAT HAS NOW TO BE TRAVELLED.

On departing from the city of Kerman you find the road for seven days most wearisome; and I will tell you how this is. The first three days you meet with no water, or next to none. And what little you do meet with is bitter green stuff, so salt that one can drink it. Hence it is necessary to carry water for the people for these last three days; as for the cattle, they must needs drink of the water I have mentioned, as there is no help for it, and their great thirst makes them do so. But it affects them to such a degree that sometimes they die of it. In all

On the Desert.

those three days you meet with no human habitation; it is all desert, and the extremity of drought. Even of wild beasts there are none, for there is nothing for them to eat.

After those three days of desert you arrive at a stream of fresh water running underground, but along which there are holes broken in here and there, perhaps undermined by the stream, at which you can get sight of it. It has an abundant supply, and travellers, worn with the hardships of the desert, here rest and refresh themselves and their beasts.

You then enter another desert which extends for four days; it is very

much like the former except that you do see some wild asses. And at the termination of these four days of desert the kingdom of Kerman comes to an end, and you find another city which is called COBINAN.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF COBINAN AND THE THINGS THAT ARE MADE THERE.

COBINAN is a large town. The people worship Mahommet. There is much iron and steel and *Ondanique*, and they make steel mirrors of great

Chinar or Oriental Plane-Tree ; Supposed to be the "*Arbre Sol.*"

size and beauty. They also prepare both *Tutia* (a thing very good for the eyes) and *Spodium ;* and I will tell you the process.

They have a vein of a certain earth which has the required quality, and this they put into a great flaming furnace, whilst over the furnace there is an iron grating. The smoke and moisture, expelled from the earth of which I speak, adhere to the iron grating, and thus form *Tutia*, whilst the slag that is left after burning is the *Spodium.*

OF A CERTAIN DESERT THAT CONTINUES FOR EIGHT DAYS' JOURNEY.

When you depart from this City of Cobinan, you find yourself again in a Desert of surpassing aridity, which lasts for some eight days; here are neither fruits nor trees to be seen, and what water there is is bitter and bad, so that you have to carry both food and water. The cattle must needs drink the bad water, will they nill they, because of their great thirst. At the end of those eight days you arrive at a province which is called TONOCAIN. It has a good many towns and villages, and forms the extremity of Persia toward the North. It also contains an immense plain on which is found the ARBRE SOL, which we Christians call the *Arbre Sec;* and I will tell you what it is like. It is a tall and thick tree, having the bark on one side green and the other white; and it produces a rough husk like that of a chestnut, but without any thing in it. The wood is yellow like box, and very strong, and there are no other trees near it nor within a hundred miles of it, except on one side where you find trees within about ten miles' distance. And there, the people of the country tell you, was fought the battle between Alexander and King Darius.

"The port of Hormos," said Fred, as Frank paused, "was an important place of commerce in Polo's time, but it seems to have been moved from the mainland to an island five miles away soon after the Venetian traveller visited it. It was frequently attacked by the hostile tribes which occupied that part of Persia, and the inhabitants concluded they would be safer with a strip of water between them and their enemies. So they moved to the island about the beginning of the fourteenth century.

"The site of the old city has been identified in modern times," Fred continued, "and so has that of the island. The latter is of little consequence at present, since a new port, Bunder Abbas, has been established, and the commerce of the surrounding region goes there.

"The Plain of Formosa is less fertile now than in Marco's day, but there are parts of it where one may travel for miles through groves of trees producing abundantly of fruits pecu-

liar to the country. One modern traveller says it is called by the natives 'The Paradise of Persia,' and abounds in orange-groves, and orchards containing apples, pears, peaches, apricots, pomegranates, and pistachio nuts. He also says there are vineyards from which they formerly made wine, so that Polo's description fits the region exactly. But the name 'Formosa' is not known there, and is probably a corruption of 'Hormuzia,' or it may have been applied in consequence of the beauty of the country. 'Formosa' is the Portuguese word for beautiful.

"To show how exact was this description of the country," said Fred, "let us compare the itinerary of Polo with the narrative of a modern traveller, Major R. M. Smith, who went from Kerman to Bunder Abbas in 1866. First we will look at Polo's account:—

		Marches.
1.	From Kerman across a plain to the top of a mountain-pass, where *extreme cold was experienced*	7
2.	A descent, occupying	2
3.	A great plain, called *Reobarles*, in a much warmer climate, abounding in francolin partridge, and in dates and tropical fruit, with a ruined city of former note, called *Camadi*, near the head of the plain, which extends for	5
4.	A second very bad pass, descending for twenty miles, say . .	1
5.	A well-watered fruitful plain, which is crossed to *Hormuz*, on the shores of the Gulf	2
	Total	17

And here is the report of Major Smith:—

1.	From Kerman to the caravanserai of Deh Bakri in the pass so called. The ground as he ascended became covered with snow, and the weather was bitterly cold	6
2.	Two miles *over very deep snow* brought him to the top of the pass; he then descended fourteen miles to his halt. Two miles to the south of the crest he passed a second caravanserai. The next march continued the descent for fourteen miles, and then carried him ten miles along the banks of the Rudkhanah-i-Shor.	

		Marches.
	The approximate height of the pass above the sea is estimated at 8,000 feet	2
3.	Clumps of date-palms growing near the village showed that he had reached a totally different climate. The lands yield grain, millet, pulse, French- and horse-beans, rice, cotton, henna, Palma Christi, and dates, and in part are of great fertility. . . . Rainy season from January to March, after which a luxuriant crop of grass. Across this plain (districts of Jiruft and Rudbar), the height of which above the sea is something under 2,000 feet,	6
4.	Six and one half hours, "nearly the whole way over a most difficult mountain-pass," called the Pass of Nevergu	1
5.	Two long marches over a plain, part of which is described as "continuous cultivation for some sixteen miles," and the rest as a "most uninteresting plain"	2
	Total as before . . .	17

"You observe," said Fred, "that the two travellers were exactly seventeen days each in making the journey. It is possible that for a part of their way their routes were not precisely the same, but there could not have been much difference. As an illustration of how much the travelling facilities of to-day resemble those of six hundred years ago nothing could be better."

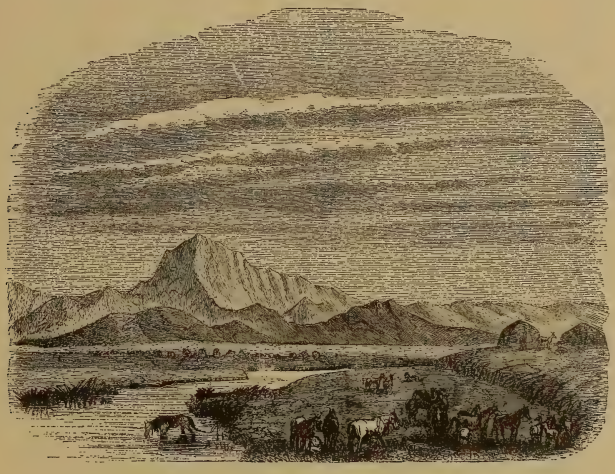
Some one in the audience asked if it is the custom now for the king to take possession of the property of a foreigner who dies there, and if the heat is really as great as represented.

Fred was unable to answer the question, and the doctor came to his assistance.

"The rulers of the country would be very likely to take possession of his property," the doctor explained, "unless the foreigner left somebody to represent him. Even in more civilized countries than Persia this is often the case, or I might say that the result is pretty much the same. The property of a foreigner dying in New York, and leaving no heirs in America, will go to the State under certain conditions, and if the State does not claim it, the lawyers are likely to use it up in 'expenses.'

I think the records of the courts will give an abundance of illustrations of the correctness of my assertion.

"As to the heat of the country in summer, I think Marco is correct. You remember I told you of the great heat at Bagdad during four months of the year; it is just as bad at Bunder Abbas and Hormuz, and some say it is worse. One traveller says Bunder Abbas is so unhealthy that foreigners could not stop there after the end of March; and another says that, during the summer, not a hundredth part of the population remained. The



Encampment in a Valley near Kerman.

people live on dates and salt-fish, as in Polo's time, and they have a fish exactly resembling the tunny of the Mediterranean."

"Do they really lie in the water as he describes?" inquired a bright-eyed boy sitting near the doctor.

"Certainly they do," was the reply. "The custom is not confined to that country, but may be found in other parts of the world. The people of the Philippine Islands indulge in the practice, and so do the natives of several parts of India; in the West India Islands and in Brazil, the natives take to the water during the prevalence of great heat, and you might find that many a resident of New York or Philadelphia has spent several hours in

his bath-tub on a hot summer's day. It is said that some of the inhabitants of the Malay Peninsula will go to sleep in the water, but I will not vouch for their doing so. It must be no easy matter to arrange an aqueous couch so that the sleeper can run no risk of being drowned."

"I suppose," said another of the audience, "that the terrible wind described by Marco, is the simoom or sirocco."

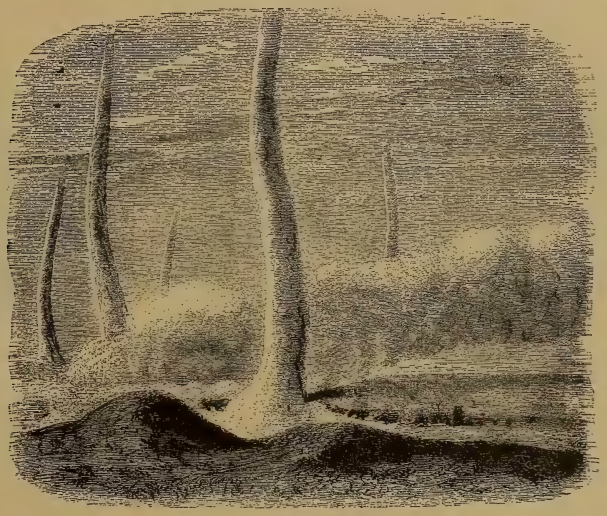
"Yes," was the reply; "though there is some doubt as to its baking the bodies of its victims in the manner he mentions. But the destruction of whole armies by the simoom has occurred repeatedly in history, and we can readily believe how the host of the king of Kerman was swept away in front of Hormuz. You recall 'The Destruction of Sennacherib,' and especially the versified form of the story, which nearly every school-boy knows by heart. It was doubtless the simoom from the desert that wrought the destruction of the army, and it is not impossible that the incident related by our great traveller is borrowed from the biblical account."

At the request of several members of the Society, Dr. Allen gave a short account of his experience with the simoom.

"My first acquaintance with it was in Egypt," said the doctor. "It is there known as the *khamseen* (fifty), for the reason that it blows for fifty days altogether. It began about the first of April and blew for three days; then it stopped for three days, and next we had two days of khamseen and two days without it. It blows from two to five days at a time, and the interval that follows is generally the same as the duration of the wind. Consequently, the fifty days of the desert wind are not over until a hundred days from their commencement.

"The wind comes from the desert, which is heated to a very high degree by the rays of the sun directed upon the sand. Over the desert it sometimes reaches 180° Fahrenheit, and during the khamseen at Cairo, I have known the thermometer to mark 122° in the shade; the air is full of the finest sand, and there is so much of it that the sun is half obscured by a yel-

low haze. The air is perfectly dry, the sand enters the lungs, and this inconvenience, added to the great heat, is what makes the wind so difficult to bear. Every thing it touches is parched and withered, and men and animals suffer from thirst. I do not believe there is any actual poison in the atmosphere, but the sand and heat and dryness have the effect of poison. The sand penetrates everywhere that the air can find its way; the best way of guarding against it is to go inside the house, close all the doors and windows, and remain there till the wind has done blowing.



Sand-Pillars during a Simoom.

On the desert it is much hotter than in the cities, and, besides, there is no shelter from the wind. If the wind blows hard, the whole sand of the desert seems to be in motion, and sand-pillars are formed resembling water-spouts at sea. Caravans and armies are overcome by it, and unless they have a plentiful supply of water, they perish of thirst and are buried under the ridges formed by the moving sand.

"I left Cairo one morning when the khamseen was blowing and the thermometer stood at 112° in the shade. Four hours later I was at Alexandria and breathed the cool breeze of the

Mediterranean at 65°. You can be sure the change was a great relief and I had no desire to return to Cairo."

Fred rose to his feet as the doctor sat down, and called attention to the stitched boats mentioned by Marco. "They are still in use," said he, "but are being replaced by boats with iron fastenings, since iron has become much cheaper. On the coast of India, they have what they call a *masullah* boat, with very high sides, and having the planks fastened together with ropes.

An Eastern Funeral Procession, with Hired Mourners.

Any one who has landed at Madras or Pondicherry is familiar with them, and can testify that they are well adapted for passing through the surf."

The doctor nodded assent to Fred's remark. He had a vivid recollection of landing at Madras in a masullah boat, in which he was thoroughly drenched before setting foot on the beach.

"It may seem odd to you," continued Fred, "that they have hired mourners to weep at funerals, but such is really the case in many parts of the East. It is a regular profession or occupation

in Egypt, and many a woman in Cairo, Damascus, or Bagdad makes her living by weeping at funerals."

There was a ripple of laughter at this announcement, and then Fred proceeded to explain further the text of the book.

"The description of the desert of Kerman is excellent, and answers for the country as we find it to-day. The underground stream referred to is an artificial canal, such as can be found in many parts of Persia; in the desert of Kerman there are several of these canals, one of them being thirty-six miles long. They were built a great while ago when the country was more populous than at present, and in many cases the people do not know where they come from.

"The *Arbre Sol* or *Arbre Sec* mentioned by Marco," said Fred, "was undoubtedly the *chinar* or Oriental plane-tree. A modern writer on botany says the chinar is very tall and has large leaves; the fruit looks like a chestnut but has no kernel, and the wood is brown and full of veins. There was a fable connected with the Arbre Sec to the effect that it was able to talk and make prophecies. One legend is that Alexander the Great came to the tree of the sun and asked it to tell him if he would be successful in battle, and an old picture represents him seeking the desired information.

Alexander the Great Worshipping the *Arbre Sol.*
(From an Old Print.)

"And now," he continued, "I think Frank has rested sufficiently to be ready to give us more of the story for which all are waiting." Frank took the hint and said that they were about to learn the origin of the word "assassin."

CONCERNING THE OLD MAN OF THE MOUNTAIN.

MULEHET is a country in which the Old Man of the Mountain dwelt in former days; and the name means "*Place of the Aram.*" I will tell you his whole history as related by Messer Marco Polo, who heard it from several natives of that region.

The Old Man was called in their langnage ALOADIN. He had caused a certain valley between two mountains to be enclosed, and had turned it into a garden, the largest and most beautiful that ever was seen, filled with every variety of fruit. In it were erected pavilions and palaces the most elegant that can be imagined, all covered with gilding and exquisite painting. And there were runnels too, flowing freely with wine and milk and honey and water; and numbers of ladies, the most beautiful in the world, who could play on all manner of instruments, and sung most sweetly, and danced in a manner that it was charming to behold. For the Old Man desired to make his people believe that this was actually Paradise. So he had fashioned it after the description that Mahommet gave of his Paradise, to wit, that it should be a beautiful garden running with conduits of wine and milk and honey and water, and sure enough the Saracens of those parts believed that it *was* Paradise!

Now no man was allowed to enter the Garden save those whom he intended to be his ASHISHIN. There was a Fortress at the entrance to the Garden, strong enough to resist all the world, and there was no other way to get in. He kept at his Court a number of the youths of the country, from twelve to twenty years of age, such as had a taste for soldiering, and to these he used to tell tales about Paradise, just as Mahommet had been wont to do, and they believed in him just as the Saracens believe in Mahommet. Then he would introduce them into his garden, some four, or six, or ten at a time, having first made them drink a certain potion which cast them into a deep sleep, and then causing them to be lifted and carried in. So when they awoke they found themselves in the Garden.

HOW THE OLD MAN USED TO TRAIN HIS ASSASSINS.

When therefore they awoke, and found themselves in a place so charming, they deemed that it was Paradise in very truth.

Now this Prince whom we call the Old One kept his Court in grand and noble style, and made those simple hill-folks about him believe firmly that he was a great Prophet. And when he wanted one of his *Ashishin* to send on any mission, he would cause that potion whereof I spoke to be given to one of the youths in the Garden, and then had him carried into his Palace. So when the young man awoke, he found himself in the Castle, and no longer in that Paradise; whereat he was not over well pleased. He was then conducted to the Old Man's presence, and bowed before him with great veneration as believing himself to be in the presence of a true Prophet. The Prince would then ask whence he

Scene in an Oriental Garden.

came, and he would reply that he came from Paradise! and that it was exactly such asMahommet had described it in the law. This of course gave the others who stood by, and who had not been admitted, the greatest desire to enter therein.

So when the Old Man would have any Prince slain, he would say to such a youth: "Go thou and slay So and So; and when thou returnest my Angels shall bear thee into Paradise. And shouldst thou die, nathe-less even so will I send my Angels to carry thee back into Paradise." So he caused them to believe; and thus there was no order of his that they would not affront any peril to execute, for the great desire they had to

get back into that Paradise of his. And in this manner the Old One got his people to murder any one whom he desired to get rid of. Thus, too, the great dread that he inspired all Princes withal, made them become his tributaries in order that he might abide at peace and amity with them.

I should also tell you that the Old Man had certain others under him, who copied his proceedings and acted exactly in the same manner. One of these was sent into the territory of Damascus, and the other into Curdistan.

HOW THE OLD MAN CAME BY HIS END.

Now it came to pass in the year 1252, that Alaü, Lord of the Tartars of the Levant, heard tell of these great crimes of the Old Man, and resolved to make an end of him. So he took and sent one of his Barons with a great Army to that Castle, and they besieged it for three years, but they could not take it, so strong was it. And indeed if they had had food within, it never would have been taken. But after being besieged those three years they ran short of victual, and were taken. The Old Man was put to death with all his men, and the Castle with its Garden of Paradise was levelled with the ground. And since that time he has had no successor; and there was an end to all his villainies.

Now let us go back to our journey.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF SAPURGAN.

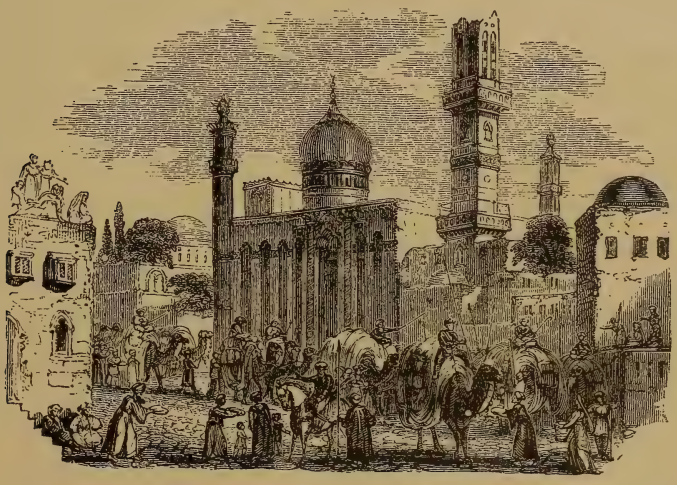
On leaving the Castle, you ride over fine plains and beautiful valleys, and pretty hill-sides producing excellent grass-pasture, and abundance of fruits, and all other products. Armies are glad to take up their quarters here on account of the plenty that exists. This kind of country extends for six days' journey, with a goodly number of towns and villages, in which the people are worshippers of Mahommet. Sometimes you also meet with a tract of desert extending for fifty or sixty miles, or somewhat less, and in these deserts you find no water, but have to carry it along with you. The beasts do without drink until you have got across the desert tract and come to watering places.

So after travelling for six days, as I have told you, you come to a city called SAPURGAN. It has great plenty of every thing, but especially of

the very best melons in the world. They preserve them by paring them round and round into strips, and drying them in the sun. When dry they are sweeter than honey, and are carried off for sale all over the country. There is also abundance of game here, both of birds and beasts.

OF THE CITY OF BALC.

BALC is a noble city and a great, though it was much greater in former days. But the Tartars and other nations have greatly ravaged and destroyed it. There were formerly many fine palaces and buildings of marble, and the ruins of them still remain. The people of the city tell that it was here that Alexander took to wife the daughter of Darius.



Caravan Passing through a City.

Here, you should be told, is the end of the empire of the Tartar Lord of the Levant. And this city is also the limit of Persia in the direction between east and northeast.

When you have quitted Balc, you ride some twelve days between northeast and east, without finding any human habitation, for the people have all taken refuge in fastnesses among the mountains, on account of the banditti and armies that harassed them. There is plenty of water on the road, and abundance of game; there are lions too. You can get no provisions on the road, and must carry with you all that you require for these twelve days.

OF TAICAN, AND THE MOUNTAINS OF SALT. ALSO OF THE PROVINCE OF CASEM.

After those twelve days' journey you come to a fortified place called TAICAN, where there is a great corn market. It is a fine place, and the mountains that you see toward the south are all composed of salt. People from all the countries round, to some thirty days' journey, come to fetch this salt, which is the best in the world, and is so hard that it can only be broken with iron picks. 'T is in such abundance that it would supply the whole world to the end of time. Other mountains there grow almonds and pistachioes, which are exceedingly cheap.

When you leave this town and ride three days farther between north-east and east, you meet with many fine tracts full of vines and other fruits, and with a goodly number of habitations, and every thing to be had very cheap. The people are worshippers of Mahommet, and are an evil and murderous generation. They wear nothing on the head but a cord some ten palms long twisted round it. They are excellent huntsmen, and take a great deal of game; in fact, they wear nothing but the skins of the beasts they have taken in the chase, for they make of them both coats and shoes. Indeed, all of them are acquainted with the art of dressing skins for these purposes.

When you have ridden those three days, you find a town called CASEM, which is subject to a count. His other towns and villages are on the hills, but through this town there flows a river of some size. There are a great many porcupines hereabouts, and very large ones too. When hunted with dogs, several of them will get together and huddle close, shooting their quills at the dogs, which get many a serious wound thereby.

This town of Casem is at the head of a very great province, which is also called Casem. The people have a peculiar language. The peasants who keep cattle abide in the mountains, and have their dwellings in caves, which form fine and spacious houses for them, and are made with ease, as the hills are composed of earth.

After leaving the town of Casem, you ride for three days without finding a single habitation, or any thing to eat or drink, so that you have to carry with you every thing that you require. At the end of those three

days you reach a province called Badashan, about which we shall now tell you.

Fred rose as soon as Frank paused and remarked that Polo's Old Man of the Mountain was described by several writers at different periods and the story was substantially the same. "It is given," said Fred, "in Chinese and Arabic manuscripts, and its romantic character seems to have pleased the fancy of the Orientals. According to the histories it had a base of truth, as there was a powerful prince in the north of Persia who used to intoxicate his followers with the Indian drug known as hasheesh or bhang, and while they were thus intoxicated they would commit any crime their master desired them to. Perhaps the doctor will tell us what hasheesh is."

"It is a preparation from the *Cannabis Indica* or Indian hemp," said Dr. Allen. "It is used in medicine as a substitute for opium, for producing sleep and relieving pain; it is less certain in its action, but does not have the injurious effects of that well-known drug. An extract of our own hemp has the same properties as the Oriental article, but in a far milder degree. A person under the influence of hasheesh loses control of his faculties and his mind is filled with all sorts of fancies. Bayard Taylor gives a graphic description of his own experience with the drug during his stay in Damascus, where he and a companion made an experiment with it. By mistake they each took a very large dose of hasheesh and did not recover from its effects for several hours. Mr. Taylor's mind was filled with the most beautiful pictures of Oriental scenery, and while perfectly aware that he was in a room of a hotel at Damascus, he seemed to be travelling from one end of Asia to the other, as if he possessed the magic carpet of the Arabian Nights. His companion, a robust Kentuckian, imagined himself to be a locomotive. During the whole night he paced up and down the room moving his arms like the cranks of a railway engine, and breathing in short, quick puffs like the escape of steam from the cylinders. 'Hasheesheen' would be

the Arabic name of men under the influence of the drug, and from it you can easily derive the word 'assassin.'

"And while on the subject of the Old Man of the Mountain," continued the doctor, "let me remark that the same name was applied by the Crusaders to the chief of a tribe in Syria, and that it was long retained by his successors. There is now living in Bombay the chief of the *Khojas*, a sect embracing some fifty thousand followers, and having a religion which is a curious mixture of Moslem, Parsee, and Hindoo practices. He is descended from the Old Man of the Mountain mentioned by Polo, and receives a large income from the members of his sect. Mulehet is doubtless intended for Alamut, or 'Eagle's Nest,' the principal fortress of The Prince of the Assassins at the time described by our author. Its position has been identified by modern travellers, though there is some dispute as to its exact locality. The history of the long siege and destruction of the castle is practically correct, except that one of the fortresses held out fourteen years before surrendering,"

Agha Khan Mehetali, Present Successor of the Old Man of the Mountain.

"By Sapurgan," said Fred, as soon as the doctor had concluded, "Polo doubtless means Shibrigan, a city about ninety miles west of Balc and standing in the middle of a fertile plain. The melons of this region are famous to-day, and the people still follow the practice of drying them in the sun as figs and raisins are dried in Europe. Colonel Yule says they are brought to Delhi and other cities of Northern India by the Afghan traders who come every year with camel-loads of dried fruits of various kinds.

"Balc or Balkh is the name of the most northern province of

A Walled Town in Persia.

Afghanistan and also of its capital. The city is of less consequence now than in Polo's day, as it has only two or three thousand inhabitants; the work of plundering and destruction has been kept up through all the centuries, and it is a wonder that any city remains there. The ruins of the ancient city cover a large extent of ground, but the modern Balkh is not at all imposing in appearance, as it has only a mud wall for its protection. At the time of its capture by Genghis Khan the whole population was marched out into the plain by companies under the pretence of counting them, but as soon as they were out of sight of the city they were massacred. This was the Mongol custom of making war; as the armies advanced it was determined to leave no enemies behind them to close the road. Dogana is a puzzle to all the writers on Polo's travels, as none of them have been able to identify it.

"But we are better off with Taican," he continued, "as it exists to-day under the name of Tailkan, a city captured and destroyed by Genghis Khan after his usual fashion. At present it has only a few hundred inhabitants, but not far off are the mines of salt from which a large area of country is supplied. The people wear narrow fillets of goat's hair around their heads, and their coats are made of sheepskin. So you see our author's description is good for all ages. Casem is for Kishm, a town on the Varasch River, and the seat of a district ruler who corresponds to Polo's Count. In the vicinity there are artificial caves where people dwell; the hills are composed of clay and pebbles, and it is not at all difficult to excavate them."

The meeting was about to adjourn when one of the younger auditors asked if it was true that the porcupine could project his quills at an assailant.

"It was long believed that such was the case," the doctor answered, "and even now you will occasionally find an advocate of the theory. The porcupine's quills are wholly defensive; they are very slightly attached to the skin, so that when the animal is seized by an adversary the quills come off at the touch. But he

cannot throw them from him, though it is possible that when he is enraged some may drop off and fall to the ground or be shaken a short distance. When he is quiet the quills lie along his back, but when he is enraged they rise like the bristles on the back of a pig or the hair of an alarmed cat. The most vulnerable part of the porcupine is his head, and, therefore, when attacked, he endeavors to protect it from harm by turning his tail in the direction of danger and rolling himself into a ball like a hedgehog. In Polo's time there was a general belief in the power of the porcupine to project its quills, and hence the statement is not at all an unusual one."

At the end of Dr. Allen's disquisition on the porcupine the Society adjourned for the evening. At their next meeting Frank opened the reading without any preliminaries, and proceeded to tell about Badashan and its peculiarities.

CHAPTER VI.

In Central Asia—Badakshan, Cashmere, Kashgar, Samarcand, and "The Roof of the World"—The *Ovis Poli*—Account of a Miracle—Phenomena of High Altitudes—Bolor and Kashgar—Samarcand—Vambery's Travels—How an Asiatic Prince Was Deceived.

OF THE PROVINCE OF BADASHAN.

BADASHAN is a Province inhabited by people who worship Mahommet, and have a peculiar language. It forms a very great kingdom, and the royalty is hereditary. All those of the royal blood are descended from King Alexander and the daughter of King Darius, who was Lord of the vast Empire of Persia. And all these kings call themselves in the Saracen tongue ZULCARNIAIN, which is as much as to say *Alexander;* and this out of regard for Alexander the Great.

It is in this province that those fine and valuable gems the Balas Rubies are found. They are got in certain rocks among the mountains, and in the search for them the people dig great caves underground, just as is done by miners for silver. There is but one special mountain that produces them, and it is called SYGHINAN. The stones are dug on the king's account, and no one else dares dig in that mountain on pain of forfeiture of life as well as goods; nor may any one carry the stones out of the kingdom. But the king amasses them all, and sends them to other kings when he has tribute to render, or when he desires to offer a friendly present; and such only as he pleases he causes to be sold. Thus he acts in order to keep the Balas at a high value; for if he were to allow everybody to dig, they would extract so many that the world would be glutted with them, and they would cease to bear any value. Hence it is that he allows so few to be taken out, and is so strict in the matter.

There is also in the same country another mountain, in which azure is found; 't is the finest in the world, and is got in a vein like silver.

There are also other mountains which contain a great amount of silver ore, so that the country is a very rich one; but it is also (it must be said) a very cold one. It produces numbers of excellent horses, remarkable for their speed. They are not shod at all, although constantly used in mountainous country, and on very bad roads. They go at a great pace even down steep descents, where other horses neither would nor could do the like. And Messer Marco was told that not long ago they possessed in that province a breed of horses descended from Alexander's horse Bucephalus, all of which had from their birth a

Camp Scene in Badakshan.

particular mark on the forehead. This breed was entirely in the hands of an uncle of the king's; and in consequence of his refusing to let the king have any of them, the latter put him to death. The widow then, in despite, destroyed the whole breed, and it is now extinct.

The mountains of this country also supply Saker falcons of excellent flight, and plenty of Lanners likewise. Beasts and birds for the chase there are in great abundance. Good wheat is grown, and also barley without husk. They have no olive oil, but make oil from sesamé, and also from walnuts.

In the mountains there are vast numbers of sheep—400, 500, or 600 in a single flock, and all of them wild; and though many of them are taken, they never seem to get aught the scarcer.

Those mountains are so lofty that 't is a hard day's work, from morning till evening, to get to the top of them. On getting up, you find an extensive plain, with great abundance of grass and trees, and copious springs of pure water running down through rocks and ravines.

A Flock of Mountain Sheep.

In those brooks are found trout and many other fish of dainty kinds; and the air in those regions is so pure, and residence there so healthful, that when the men who dwell below in the towns, and in the valleys and plains, find themselves attacked by any kind of fever or other ailment that may hap, they lose no time in going to the hills; and after abiding there two or three days, they quite recover their health through the excellence of that air. And Messer Marco said he had

proved this by experience: for when in those parts he had been ill for about a year, but as soon as he was advised to visit that mountain, he did so and got well at once.

In this kingdom there are many strait and perilous passes, so difficult to force that the people have no fear of invasion. Their towns and villages also are on lofty hills, and in very strong positions. They are excellent archers, and much given to the chase; indeed, most of them are

Ancient Silver Dish of Debased Greek Art, formerly in the Possession of the Princes of Badakshan, now in the India Museum. Four Ninths of the Diameter of the Original.

dependent for clothing on the skins of beasts, for stuffs are very dear among them. The great ladies, however, are arrayed in stuffs, and I will tell you the style of their dress! They all wear trousers made of cotton cloth, and into the making of these some will put 60, 80, or even 100 ells of stuff.

OF THE PROVINCE OF PASHAI.

You must know that ten days' journey to the south of Badashan there is a Province called PASHAI, the people of which have a peculiar language, and are Idolaters, of a brown complexion. They are great

adepts in sorceries and the diabolic arts. The men wear earrings and brooches of gold and silver set with stones and pearls. They are a pestilent people and a crafty; and they live upon flesh and rice. Their country is very hot.

Now let us proceed and speak of another country which is seven days' journey from this one towards the south-east, and the name of which is KESHIMUR.

OF THE PROVINCE OF KESHIMUR.

Keshimur also is a Province inhabited by a people who are Idolaters and have a language of their own. They have an astonishing acquaintance with the devilries of enchantment; insomuch that they make their

A Lady of Cashmere with her Attendant.

idols to speak. They can also by their sorceries bring on changes of weather and produce darkness, and do a number of things so extraordinary that no one without seeing them would believe them. Indeed, this country is the very original source from which Idolatry has spread abroad.

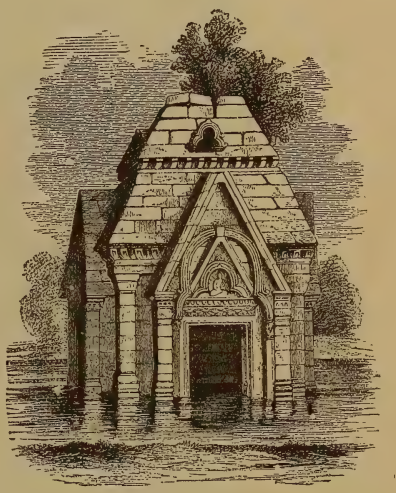
In this direction you can proceed further till you come to the Sea of India.

The men are brown and lean, but the women, taking them as brunettes, are very beautiful. The food of the people is flesh, and milk, and rice. The clime is finely tempered, being neither very hot nor very cold.

There are numbers of towns and villages in the country, but also forest and desert tracts, and strong passes, so that the people have no fear of anybody, and keep their independence, with a king of their own to rule and do justice.

There are in this country Eremites (after the fashion of those parts), who dwell in seclusion and practise great abstinence in eating and drinking. They keep from all sins forbidden in their law, so that they are regarded by their own folk as very holy persons. They live to a very great age.

There are also a number of idolatrous abbeys and monasteries. The people of the province do not kill animals nor spill blood; so if they want to eat meat they get the Saracens who dwell among them to play the butcher. The coral which is carried from our parts of the world has a better sale there than in any other country.



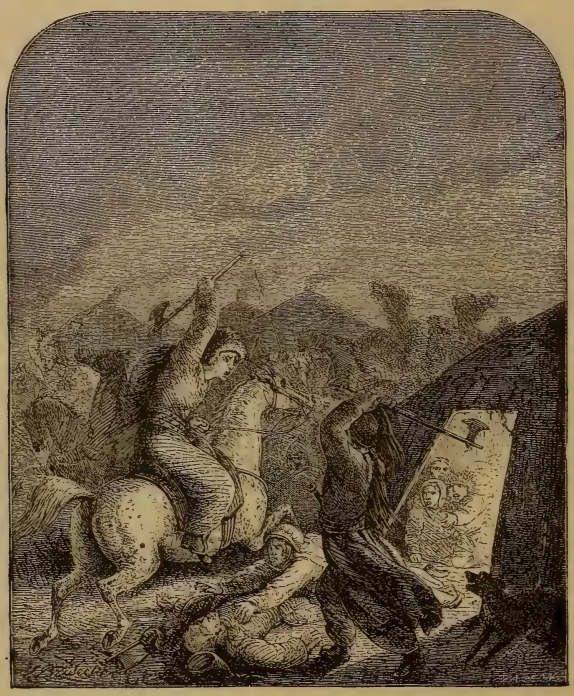
Ancient Buddhist Temple at Pandrethan in Cashmere.

Now we will quit this country, and not go any further in the same direction; for if we did so we should enter India; and that I do not wish to do at present. For, on our return journey, I mean to tell you about India: all in regular order. Let us go back therefore to Badashan, for we cannot otherwise proceed on our journey.

Frank took his seat and Fred rose to comment on what had been read.

"The Badashan of Polo," said he, "is the Badakshan of to-day. It has been visited very little by modern travellers so that our knowledge of it is not extensive; the people are Moslems as in the time of Marco, and while those of the plains and valleys speak Persian and Turkish, those of the mountains have a peculiar language or dialect of their own. They are not hospitable

to strangers, and one of their chief occupations is to make raids on their neighbors, whom they hold or sell as slaves. About sixty years ago the tables were turned upon them ; they were conquered by the Afghans and great numbers of the people of Badakshan were carried into slavery. Since that time they have partially regained their independence and have compromised with their conquerors by paying a tribute every year to the rulers of Afghanistan in order to escape the inconvenience of slavery.



A Robbers' Raid—Attacking a Camp at Night.

"Badakshan is described as a country of fertile valleys and rich pastures, and the people have great flocks of sheep and droves of horses. In summer they take them to the mountains, and when the cold weather comes on, return again to the valleys. The change of pasturage is an important event, and sometimes the mountain gorges through which they travel are filled for many hours with their flocks and herds."

"Marco speaks of the sheep being wild," said one of the audience. "Are they of the same kind as the tame sheep in the flocks?"

"Probably not," was the reply; "at least such is the general

Passing a Gorge in the Mountains.

opinion. Colonel Yule thinks they are what is called *Kach-kar* in the language of the country, and described scientifically under the name of *Ovis Vignei.* We will have something more on the subject of wild sheep after Frank has read a little further.

"The present Mir or Prince of Badakshan does not claim his descent from Alexander the Great, as Marco relates, though his ancestors doubtless did so. Their claim was supported by tradition, and they possessed several silver dishes which were of Greek origin and had descended from father to son for a great many generations. One of these dishes was sold by the Princes of Badakshan during their subjection to the Afghans, and is now in the India Museum at London. Two other dishes of the same kind were bought by a private gentleman and are now in possession of his family.

"The story of the horses descended from the famous steed of Alexander the Great is interesting and shows the Oriental ability for romancing. The horses of Badakshan are famous for their fine qualities, and one object of the Afghans in making war upon the country was to get a plentiful supply of these animals."

"What about the mines of rubies and other precious things?" inquired the youth who made the interrogatory relative to the wild sheep of Badakshan.

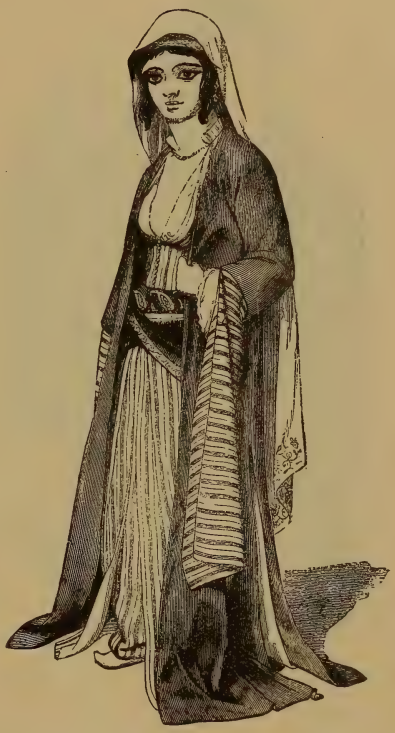
"The mines are still in existence," Fred answered, "and the royal monopoly continued until the country was conquered by the Afghans in the early part of the present century. The rubies are not obtained in large quantities, and the quality is very poor, so that we must take Marco's story with a great deal of seasoning. Mines of iron, lead, and other substances are in the mountains, but not extensively worked, and as for silver mines, no modern traveller has been able to hear of them.

"What Marco says of the healthiness of the mountains may be said of mountainous land in other parts of the world. There is a plateau or elevated plain in Badakshan which answers well to his description, and as he had experienced many hardships in his travels in the lower country, it is no wonder that he found the upper regions delightful. Europeans living in India go to the hill country in summer for the restoration of their health, and they find, as Marco did, that they quite recover in a very few days.

"Now," said Fred, "we come to something that will interest our sisters and mothers, as it refers to the dress of the ladies of Badakshan."

There was a rustle of silk and other things in the assemblage, and it was evident that all his fair auditors were intent upon what he was about to say. When silence had been obtained Fred proceeded.

"The ladies of Badakshan do not wear such extensive garments in our day as in Polo's time," said Fred, "but the custom prevails in other parts of the East. One writer says that the ladies' trowsers in Northern India might justify Marco's liberal estimate of the quantity of material required to make them, and the same is the case in Afghanistan, Turkey, and Egypt. To look at the walking or riding dress of an Egyptian lady on the streets of Cairo, you can readily be pardoned for believing that not less than a hundred yards of silk and muslin had gone into its composition."



In-door Dress of an Egyptian Lady.

One of the fair listeners asked if the fashions for ladies' dresses in the East changed as much as in Europe or America.

"Not by any means," was the reply. "Fashion is the same from one year to another, and we might almost say from one century to another. The garments are the same for all seasons of the year, except that they are of heavier material for winter than for summer. I will show you some pictures of ladies in Oriental dress, and you may say how you would like to have the same fashion introduced here."

Fred took from a shelf of the library a copy of Lane's "Modern Egyptians," and opening it at the chapter on dress, handed it to his questioner. The session of the Society was temporarily suspended, and after the pictures had been examined, the young ladies voted unanimously, without leaving their places, that they vastly preferred the costume of the Occident to that of the Orient. They were especially opposed to the veil which concealed so much of the face. One young lady remarked that it was impossible to say whether a girl was pretty or not when her face was concealed, and she would n't wear such a veil, no matter whether it was the fashion or not. It is proper to remark that she was accounted handsome, at least by the young men of her acquaintance.

Out-door Dress of an Egyptian Lady.

Dr. Allen said the women of Egypt and Turkey were emancipating themselves somewhat from the rigid rules of the Moslems regarding dress. "Many of them," said he, "have adopted French boots in place of the clumsy shoe with pointed toes and they wear a head-covering which is fashioned after the European manner. The *yashmak*, or veil, is of a material so thin that the face can be seen through it, and the walking dress is gathered in at the waist and narrowed in the sleeves, so that all figures do not present the same appearance. They go out more than was formerly the custom, and with more freedom. Altogether," he concluded, "the women of the East are more progressive than the men, and through the influences of Europe there has been a

great advance in the condition of women in Turkey and Egypt in the past twenty years. Formerly it was not considered worth while to teach women to read, but latterly schools have been established for their instruction, and not only are they educated in the language and customs of their own countries, but a great many of them can speak and read French or Italian."

There was a round of applause at the end of the doctor's remarks, and then Fred resumed his comments upon the story of Marco.

"Pashai has not been clearly identified," said he; "and we will pass to Keshimur, by which you will readily understand Marco means Cashmere."

"That 's where the fine shawls come from," remarked the young lady who had shown such aversion to the Egyptian veil.

"Yes," responded Fred, "Cashmere is famous for shawls, and also for leather goods, embroidery, ottar of roses, and other things, but shawls are the principal articles of export."

Another young lady wished to know how the Cashmere shawls were made. Fred looked inquiringly at Dr. Allen, and the latter came to his aid.

"It is said that there are about thirty thousand shawls made in Cashmere every year," said the doctor. "Most of them are sent to India, and from there many find their way to Europe and America. Sixteen thousand looms are kept at work, and some of the shawls require the labor of three or four men for a whole year."

"How is it that shawls can be sold at the prices we pay for them?" inquired another of the fair listeners. "I won't say how much my shawl cost, but it would be very low wages for three men for a whole year."

"There are two or three reasons for that," replied the doctor, with a smile. "In the first place labor is very low in Cashmere, and secondly the probabilities are that nineteen twentieths of the shawls called "Cashmere" never came from that country at all, and I could almost say ninety-nine out of a hundred. They are

made in Umritsur, Lahore, Delhi, and other cities of Northern India and also in the looms of France and England. A genuine Cashmere shawl of fine quality will sell in London for five hundred dollars, and some shawls will bring four or five times that figure. They are made from the hair of the Cashmere or Thibetan goat. A single goat produces only three ounces of hair suitable for shawl-weaving; it is spun into thread, and dyed after the spinning, and the greatest care is exercised from the beginning to the end of the work."

"By idolatry," Fred continued, as soon as the doctor resumed his seat, "our author doubtless means Buddhism, which was the religion of Cashmere at the time of his visit. Moreover, it was the country whence the religion was spread through Thibet by means of missionaries who went out from Cashmere to preach it. The jugglers and necromancers of Cashmere were among the most skilful of that time, and at the present day many of their tricks defy detection. So it is not at all surprising that Marco was taken in by them, and believed that they had power over the weather, and upon light and darkness.

Mongol Image of Buddha.

"By the doctrines of Buddhism," he continued, "it is forbidden to take life, and Buddhist priests should not eat animal food, though many of them violate the command. Consequently, when an animal is to be slaughtered, he is turned over to a Moslem, or, at all events, to some one who is not tender in the conscience about the work of butchering."

The doctor interrupted the narrative with a little anecdote.

"I was once," said he, "crossing the desert of Mongolia from Peking to Kiachta. The Mongols have large flocks of sheep, and are ready to sell them to strangers, though they

sometimes make a pretence of insisting that the animals must not be killed. At the first halting-place in the desert we bought a sheep from one of the herdsmen, and then asked him to slaughter it for us. He refused to do so, although he well knew that we wanted it for food. He told us to kill the sheep ourselves, which, of course, we did not wish to do.

"My companion suggested that it was not proper for us to kill an animal. Thereupon the dealer supposed we must be Lamas, and called up a professional butcher, who performed the work in fewer minutes than I am willing to say. There is a remarkable contrast between the Buddhist and Moslem religions in this particular. Buddhism forbids the taking of life, and has no restrictions upon making representations of men or other living beings. Mohammed forbade his followers to make any representations of any thing that has life, but there is not the slightest restraint upon its destruction. His religion was spread by means of wars in which those who did not adopt the faith were murdered without mercy."

As the doctor sat down Fred nodded to Frank, and the latter resumed the reading.

OF THE GREAT RIVER OF BADASHAN.

In leaving Badashan you ride twelve days between east and north-east, ascending a river that runs through land belonging to a brother of the Prince of Badashan, and containing a good many towns and villages and scattered habitations. The people are Mahommetans, and valiant in war. At the end of those twelve days you come to a province of no great size, extending indeed no more than three days' journey in any direction, and this is called VOKHAN. The people worship Mahommet, and they have a peculiar language. They are gallant soldiers, and they have a chief whom they call NONE, which is as much as to say *Count*, and they are liegemen to the Prince of Badashan.

There are numbers of wild beasts of all sorts in this region. And when you leave this little country, and ride three days north-east, always among mountains, you get to such a height that 't is said to be the high-

est place in the world! And when you have got to this height you find a great lake between two mountains, and out of it a fine river running through a plain clothed with the finest pasture in the world; insomuch that a lean beast there will fatten to your heart's content in ten days. There are great numbers of all kinds of wild beasts; among others, wild sheep of great size, whose horns are good six palms in length. From these horns the shepherds make great bowls to eat from, and they use the horns also to enclose folds for their cattle at night. Messer Marco was told also that the wolves were numerous, and killed many of those wild sheep. Hence quantities of their horns and bones were found, and these were made into great heaps by the way-side, in order to guide travellers when snow was on the ground.

Ovis Poli, the Great Sheep of Pamier.

The Plain is called PAMIER, and you ride across it for twelve days together, finding nothing but a desert without habitations or any green thing, so that travellers are obliged to carry with them whatever they have need of. The region is so lofty and cold that you do not even see any birds flying. And I must notice also that because of this great cold, fire does not burn so brightly, nor give out so much heat as usual, nor does it cook food so effectually.

Now, if we go on with our journey toward the east-north-east, we travel a good forty days, continually passing over mountains and hills, or through valleys, and crossing many rivers and tracts of wilderness. And

in all this way you find neither habitation of man, nor any green thing, but must carry with you whatever you require. The country is called BOLOR. The people dwell high up in the mountains, and are savage Idolaters, living only by the chase, and clothing themselves in the skins of beasts. They are in truth an evil race.

OF THE KINGDOM OF CASCAR.

CASCAR is a region lying between north-east and east, and constituted a kingdom in former days, but now it is subject to the Great Kaan. The people worship Mahommet. There are a good number of towns and villages, but the greatest and finest is Cascar itself. The inhabitants live by trade and handicrafts; they have beautiful gardens and vineyards, and fine estates, and grow a great deal of cotton. From this country many merchants go forth about the world on trading journeys. The natives are a wretched, niggardly set of people; they eat and drink in miserable fashion. There are in the country many Nestorian Christian who have churches of their own. The people of the country have a peculiar language, and the territory extends for five days' journey.

Head of a Native of Kashgar.

OF THE GREAT CITY OF SAMARCAN.

SAMARCAN is a great and noble city towards the north-west, inhabited by both Christians and Saracens, who are subject to the great Kaan's

nephew, CAIDOU by name; he is, however, at bitter enmity with the Kaan. I will tell you of a great marvel that happened at this city.

It is not a great while ago that SIGATAY, own brother to the Great Kaan, who was Lord of this country and of many an one besides, became a Christian. The Christians rejoiced greatly at this, and they built a great church in the city, in honor of John the Baptist; and by his name the church was called. And they took a very fine stone which belonged to the Saracens, and placed it as the pedestal of a column in the middle of the church, supporting the roof. It came to pass, however, that Sigatay died. Now the Saracens were full of rancor about that stone

View of Kashgar.

that had been theirs, and which had been set up in the church of the Christians; and when they saw that the Prince was dead, they said one to another that now was the time to get back their stone, by fair means or by foul. And that they might well do, for they were ten times as many as the Christians. So they gat together and went to the church and said that the stone they must and would have. The Christians acknowledged that it was theirs indeed, but offered to pay a large sum of money and so be quit. Howbeit, the others replied that they never would give up the stone for anything in the world. And words ran so high that the Prince heard thereof, and ordered the Christians either to arrange to satisfy the Saracens, if it might be, with money, or to give up

the stone. And he allowed them three days to do either the one thing or the other.

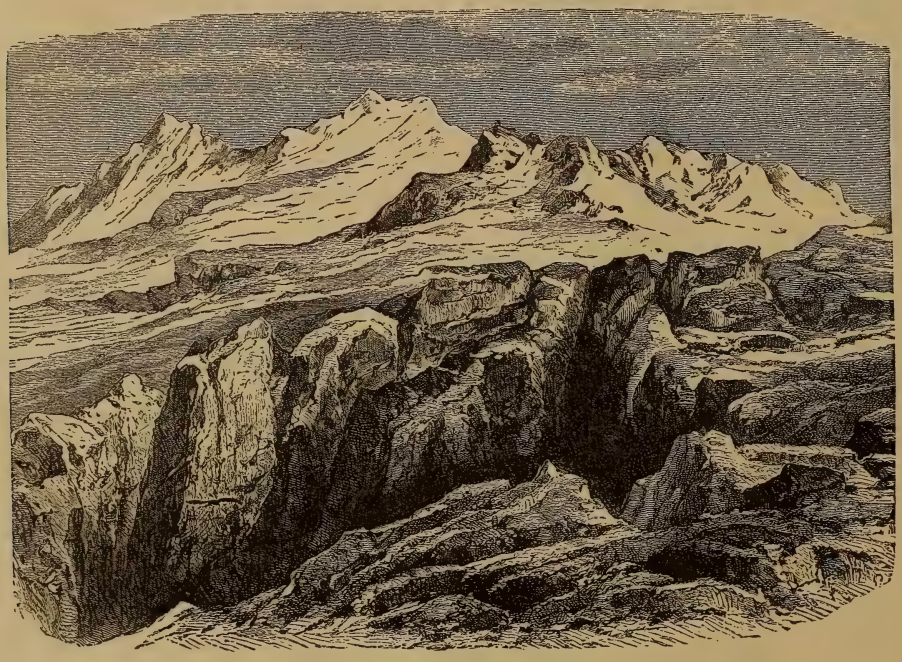
The Saracens would on no account agree to leave the stone where it was, and this out of pure despite to the Christians, for they knew well enough that if the stone were stirred the church would come down by the run. So the Christians were in great trouble and wist not what to do. But they did do the best thing possible; they besought Jesus Christ that he would consider their case, so that the holy church should not come to destruction, nor the name of its Patron Saint, John the Baptist, be tarnished by its ruin. And so when the day fixed by the Prince came round, they went to the church betimes in the morning, and lo, they found the stone removed from under the column; the foot of the column was without support, and yet it bore the load as stoutly as before! Between the foot of the column and the ground there was a space of three palms. So the Saracens had away their stone, and mighty little joy withal. It was a glorious miracle, nay, it *is* so, for the column still so standeth, and will stand as long as God pleaseth.

Now let us quit this and continue our journey.

"The upper part of the Oxus, which is locally called the Panja," said Fred, "was undoubtedly the river described by Marco on the route from Badakshan. The same road has been followed by modern travellers, and the condition of the country is very nearly what it was in Polo's time. There are several provinces from which the Mir or Prince of Badakshan may demand soldiers in time of war; they pay him a small tribute, but in nearly every other respect they are independent. The country is not densely populated, and wild beasts are abundant enough to satisfy the needs of the hunter.

"Now we come to an interesting part of the story," continued Fred. "The plain of Pamir has been recently explored, and found to be exactly as Polo describes it. For centuries it was believed that he was romancing in this part of the narrative, and it remained for an English explorer, Lieutenant Wood, to establish his veracity. The Tartars call this plain 'The Roof of the

World.' It lies between two ranges of mountains, and is about two hundred miles long by twenty in width. Lieutenant Wood found a lake in the centre, from which flows one of the head streams of the Oxus, and he was told that the pasturage was so rich that lean animals became fat in a very short time. The elevation of the lake was 15,600 feet above sea level, and the mountains around it varied from five hundred to thirty-five hundred feet in height above the lake."



"The Roof of the World."

"How about the wild sheep, the birds, and the difficulty of making fire burn?" asked one of the younger auditors.

"I am coming to the sheep and the other things," answered Fred. "The wild sheep are there, and they are very large. A pair of horns, each measuring fourteen and a half inches around the base, and having a length, following the curve, of four feet eight inches, were sent from 'The Roof of the World' to the British Museum. The animal is scientifically known as the *Ovis*

Poli, in honor of our traveller, who first described it. The popular story of that region is that the horns are so large that one man cannot lift a pair, and the carcass forms a load for two horses. Hear what Wood says about this wild sheep :

"Their horns supply shoes for the Kirghiz horses, and also a good substitute for stirrup-irons. We saw numbers of horns strewed about in every direction, the spoils of the Kirghiz hunter. Some of these were of an astonishingly large size, and belonged to an animal of a species between a goat and a sheep, inhabiting the steppes of Pamir. *The ends of the horns projecting above the snow often indicated the direction of the road;* and wherever they were heaped in large quantities and disposed in a semicircle, there our escort recognized the site of a Kirghiz summer encampment. * * * We came in sight of a rough-looking building, decked out with the horns of the wild sheep, and all but buried amongst the snow. It was a Kirghiz burying-ground."

"And he further says," continued Fred, "that these animals go in great herds, and are very difficult to kill. The wolves are their greatest enemies, but perhaps the hunters have become more destructive than formerly on account of the improvements in fire-arms.

Horns of the *Ovis Poli*.

"It is probable that Marco crossed the plain of Pamir in the season when no birds were there. The same was the case with Lieutenant Wood, but he was told that the lake was full of water-fowl in summer. The peculiarities of fire at great elevations are the same as mentioned by Marco, but they are not confined to that part of the world. At fifteen thousand feet high water boils at one hundred and seventy-five degrees, and consequently its cooking power is far less than at lower elevations."

"In the early days of the settlement of California," interrupted the doctor, "the miners in the mountains were greatly puzzled over this matter. Their staple food was stewed beans,

and they found it took much longer to cook their dinners than in the valley below. A story is told of some newly arrived miners, who boiled their beans the customary time and then found them nearly as hard as ever. They believed they had been defrauded in making their purchases, and one of them went to the mining-camp a few miles away and demanded the return of their money or, instead of it, some 'good' beans. He accepted the explanation of the phenomenon with much reluctance, and was only convinced when the other miners assured him that the higher he went in the mountains the longer it would take to prepare his dinner."

"Bolor is a region not marked on modern maps," continued Fred, as soon as the doctor had ended his story. "It is applied rather indefinitely to the region lying on the upper part of the Thibetan range, but has no distinct boundaries. Marco must have travelled slowly in continuing his journey to Cascar, or Kashgar, as it is now known. He seems to have been forty days upon the road, which modern explorers have traversed in less than twenty. But perhaps he stopped to hunt the wild sheep or other game, and, if so, we can excuse him.

"I have nothing to say of Marco's description of Kashgar," said Fred, "except that it is correct as far as it goes. The city contains about seventy thousand inhabitants, and is surrounded by a wall pierced with four gates. A strong garrison is always kept there, and the place has a large trade with Central Asia. Kashgar was an important city more than two thousand years ago, and at one time it was the capital of Turkestan. It stands on a plain near a range of mountains, and is on the bank of a river crossed by a bridge of boats. There are said to be twenty-eight thousand houses within the walls, and they are mostly built of sun-dried bricks, with flat roofs.

"There were many Christians at Kashgar in Polo's time and also at Samarcand which he does not appear to have visited in person. Samarcand now belongs to Russia, but was, until its capture by the Russians in 1868, one of the strongholds of the

Moslems and no Christian was allowed to live there. But it is getting late, and if you wish to know more about Samarcand, I refer you to Vambery's description in his 'Travels in Central Asia.' He visited the city in 1863 under the pretence of being a Moslem dervish or pilgrim from Constantinople. During his stay he was constantly under suspicion, and had a narrow escape with his life. The Emir sent for him to a special audience, and it was only by extreme impudence he convinced the ruler that he

View of Samarcand.

was not an Englishman in disguise. As soon as he had arrived in the audience chamber he walked up to the Emir, pushed aside an astonished prime-minister, and, after reciting a prayer, seated himself in the minister's place. The proceeding was quite in accordance with the character of a dervish, and its boldness seemed to please the Emir and quite disarmed his suspicions. Then followed a dialogue in which Vambery said he had made

the journey from Constantinople in order to visit the holy places of Turkestan and contemplate the sacred beauty of the Emir, whose fame had spread through the world.

"Samarcand has lost much of its ancient greatness and many of its buildings are in ruins. It contains the tomb of Timour or Tamerlane, the great conqueror, and several magnificent mosques and colleges, the latter containing students from all parts of Central Asia. The city is surrounded by gardens, and since its occupation by the Russians its prosperity has greatly increased. The old citadel of Tamerlane is now occupied by a Russian garrison, and the city has been made the capital of a large region surrounding it."

Fred paused and looked toward the President who rapped on the table and declared the evening's entertainment at an end.

CHAPTER VII.

Khotan, Yarkand, and the Great Desert of Gobi—Fables about Cotton and the Voices of the Desert—Buddhist Customs—Burning the Dead—Colossal Idols of Buddha—Asbestos Mines—Cloth Uninjured by Fire—Prester John—An Historical Myth.

"THUS far," said Frank at the opening of the next session of the Society, "we have had no mention of cotton, which is one of the products of Central Asia. Large quantities have been sent to Russia every year for a long time, and since the extension of the railway to Orenburg, on the Siberian frontier, the shipments have greatly increased. I am about to speak of Cotan, or Khotan from which the plant derives its name, and whence the knowledge of it first came to Europe. Strange stories were told about it before its real characteristics were known. One traveller called it the 'sheep-plant,' and said it grew on a stalk and produced wool. 'It has eyes, ears, and horns,' said he, 'and when it is disturbed it makes a sound like the bleating of a lamb.' Its culture was brought to Spain by the Moors in the tenth century, and from there spread through Southern Europe. The earliest notice we have of it was by Herodotus, who speaks of the trees of India bearing fleeces more delicate than those of sheep, and that the natives used them for the manufacture of cloths. In Marco's day cotton was known in Venice, but had not been brought there in large quantities.

"Now we will see what our author has to say." With this remark Frank proceeded to read :

OF THE PROVINCE OF YARCAN.

YARCAN is a province five days' journey in extent. The people follow the Law of Mahommet, but there are also Nestorian and Jacobite Christians. They are subject to the same Prince that I mentioned, the

Great Kaan's nephew. They have plenty of everything, particularly of cotton. The inhabitants are also great craftsmen, but a large proportion of them have swoln legs, and great crops at the throat, which arises from some quality in their drinking-water. As there is nothing else worth telling we may pass on.

OF A PROVINCE CALLED COTAN.

COTAN is a province lying between north-east and east, and is eight days' journey in length. The people are subject to the Great Kaan, and are all worshippers of Mahommet. There are numerous towns and villages in the country, but Cotan, the capital, is the most noble of all, and gives its name to the kingdom. Everything is to be had there in plenty, including abundance of cotton, with flax, hemp, wheat, wine, and the like. The people have vineyards and gardens and estates. They live by commerce and manufactures, and are no soldiers.

OF THE PROVINCE OF PEIN.

PEIN is a province five days' in length, lying between east and north-east. The people are worshippers of Mahommet, and subjects of the Great Kaan. There are a good number of towns and villages, but the most noble is Pein, the capital of the kingdom. There are rivers in this country in which quantities of Jasper and Chalcedony are found. The people have plenty of all products, including cotton. They live by manufactures and trade. But they have a custom that I must relate. If the husband of any woman go away upon a journey and remain away for more than 20 days, as soon as that term is past the woman may marry another man, and the husband also may then marry whom he pleases.

I should tell you that all the provinces that I have been speaking of, from Cascar forward, and those I am going to mention, as far as the city of Lop, belong to GREAT TURKEY.

OF THE PROVINCE OF CHARCHAN.

CHARCHAN is a Province of Great Turkey, lying between north-east and east. The people worship Mahommet. There are numerous towns and

villages, and the chief city of the kingdom bears its name, Charchan. The Province contains rivers which bring down Jasper and Chalcedony, and these are carried for sale into Cathay, where they fetch great prices. The whole of the Province is sandy, and so is the road all the way from Pein, and much of the water that you find is bitter and bad. However, at some places you do find fresh and sweet water. When an army passes through the land, the people escape with their wives, children, and cattle a distance of two or three days' journey into the sandy waste; and know-

Entrance to a Mine of Jasper.

ing the spots where water is to be had they are able to live there, and to keep their cattle alive, whilst it is impossible to discover them; for the wind immediately blows the sand over their track.

Quitting Charchan, you ride some five days through the sands, finding none but bad and bitter water, and then you come to a place where the water is sweet. And now I will tell you of a province called Lop, in which there is a city, also called Lop, which you come to at the end of those five days. It is at the entrance of the great Desert, and it is here that travellers repose before entering on the Desert.

OF THE CITY OF LOP AND THE GREAT DESERT.

Lop is a large town at the edge of the Desert, which is called the Desert of Lop, and is situated between east and north-east. It belongs to the Great Kaan, and the people worship Mahommet. Now, such persons as propose to cross the Desert take a week's rest in this town to refresh themselves and their cattle; and then they make ready for the journey, taking with them a month's supply for man and beast. On quitting this city they enter the Desert.

The length of this Desert is so great that 't is said it would take a

Caravan Overtaken by a Storm in the Desert.

year and more to ride from one end of it to the other. And here, where its breadth is least, it takes a month to cross it. 'T is all composed of hills and valleys of sand, and not a thing to eat is to be found on it. But after riding for a day and a night you find fresh water, enough mayhap for some fifty or a hundred persons with their beasts, but not for more. And all across the Desert you will find water in like manner, that is to say, in some twenty-eight places altogether you will find good water, but in no great quantity; and in four places also you find brackish water.

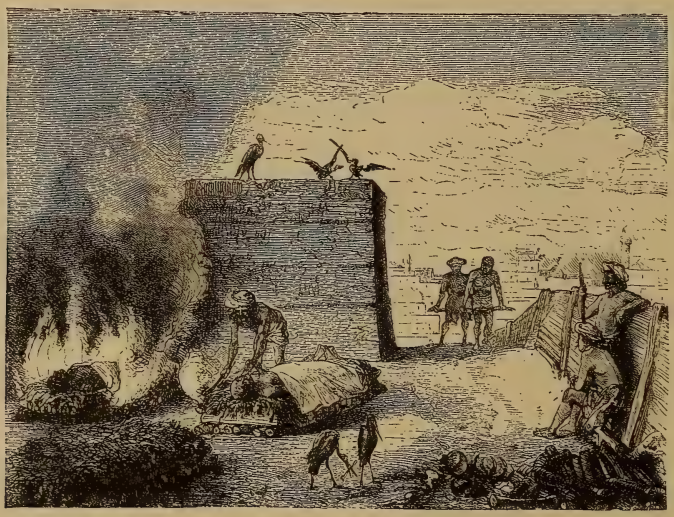
Beasts there are none; for there is nought for them to eat. But there is a marvellous thing related of this Desert, which is that when travellers are on the move by night, and one of them chances to lag behind or to fall asleep or the like, when he tries to gain his company again he will hear spirits talking, and will suppose them to be his comrades. Sometimes the spirits will call him by name; and thus shall a traveller ofttimes be led astray so that he never finds his party. And in this way many have perished. Sometimes the stray travellers will hear as it were the tramp and hum of a great cavalcade of people away from the real line of road, and taking this to be their own company they will follow the sound; and when day breaks they find that a cheat has been put on them and that they are in an ill plight. Even in the day time one hears those spirits talking. And sometimes you shall hear the sound of a variety of musical instruments, and still more commonly the sound of drums. Hence in making this journey 't is customary for travellers to keep close together. All the animals too have bells at their necks, so that they cannot easily get astray. And at sleeping-time a signal is put up to show the direction of the next march.

So thus it is that the Desert is crossed.

CONCERNING THE GREAT PROVINCE OF TANGUT.

After you have travelled thirty days through the Desert, as I have described, you come to a city called SACHIU, lying between north-east and east; it belongs to the Great Kaan, and is in a province called TANGUT. The people are for the most part Idolaters, but there are also some Nestorian Christians and some Saracens. The Idolaters have a peculiar language, and are no traders, but live by their agriculture. They have a great many abbeys and minsters full of idols of sundry fashions, to which they pay great honor and reverence, worshipping them and sacrificing to them with much ado. For example, such as have children will feed up a sheep in honor of the idol, and at the New Year, or on the day of the Idol's Feast, they will take their children and the sheep along with them into the presence of the idol with great ceremony. Then they will have the sheep slaughtered and cooked, and again present it

before the idol with like reverence, and leave it there before him, whilst they are reciting the offices of their worship and their prayers for the idol's blessing on their children. And, if you will believe them, the idol feeds on the meat that is set before it! After these ceremonies they take up the flesh and carry it home, and call together all their kindred to eat it with them in great festivity, the idol-priests receiving for their portion the head, feet, entrails, and skin, with some part of the meat. After they have eaten, they collect the bones that are left and store them carefully in a hutch.



Burning the Dead.

And you must know that all the Idolaters in the world burn their dead. And when they are going to carry a body to the burning, the kinsfolk build a wooden house on the way to the spot, and drape it with cloths of silk and gold. When the body is going past this building, they call a halt and set before it wine and meat and other eatables; and this they do with the assurance that the defunct will be received with the like attentions in the other world. All the minstrelsy in the town goes playing before the body; and when it reaches the burning-place the kinsfolk are prepared with figures cut out of parchment and paper in the shape of men and horses and camels, and also with round pieces of paper

like gold coins, and all these they burn along with the corpse. For they say that in the other world the defunct will be provided with slaves and cattle and money, just in proportion to the amount of such pieces of paper that has been burnt along with him.

But they never burn their dead until they have sent for the astrologers, and told them the year, the day, and the hour of the deceased person's birth, and when the astrologers have ascertained under what constellation, planet, and sign he was born, they declare the day on which by the rules of their art he ought to be burnt. And till that day arrive they keep the body, so that it is sometimes a matter of six months, more or less, before it comes to be burnt.

Now the way they keep the body in the house is this: They make a coffin first of a good span in thickness, very carefully joined and daintily painted. This they fill up with camphor and spices, stopping the joints with pitch and lime, and then they cover it with a fine cloth. Every day as long as the body is kept, they set a table before the dead covered with food; and they will have it that the soul comes and eats and drinks: wherefore they leave the food there as long as would be necessary in order that one should partake. Thus they do daily. And worse still! Sometimes those soothsayers shall tell them that 't is not good luck to carry out the corpse by the door, so they have to break a hole in the wall, and to draw it out that way when it is taken to the burning. And these, I assure you, are the practices of all the Idolaters of those countries.

However, we will quit this subject, and I will tell you of another city which lies towards the north-west at the extremity of the desert.

Frank paused, and was immediately followed by Fred.

"Yarcan is the old name of the modern Yarkand," said the youth; "and the statement of Polo concerning the prevalence of goitre, or swelling of the glands of the neck, is quite correct. Mr. Shaw, who recently travelled through the country, says he saw many cases of it, and was continually appealed to for iodine which was supposed to be a cure for the disease. Perhaps Dr. Allen will tell us something about it."

"Goitre is a local disease," said the doctor, in response to Fred's invitation, "and is found almost wholly in mountainous regions, where there is a large amount of lime in the drinking-water. It prevails in the Alps, Andes, and Himalaya Mountains, but is more noticeable in Switzerland than anywhere else. It is painless at first, but as the glands increase in size, the great weight causes a severe strain upon the muscles of the neck and face. The subject is not a pleasant one, and we will pass on to something else."

"The identity of Pein," continued Fred, "has not been accurately settled, but it is supposed that it stands for Pima, which was not far from the modern city of Kiria. There are stories that many cities have been buried at different times under the sands of the desert of Gobi, and it is probable that such was the fate of Pima. The jasper and chalcedony described by Marco are doubtless intended for different kinds of jade which are found in Khotan and Yarkand."

One of the auditors wished to know how jade was obtained.

"It is found in the beds of rivers in Khotan," replied Fred, "and is sought by divers or gathered when the streams are low. The stones are brought to the banks of the river and broken, and the valuable mineral is found inside. It is also obtained from mines in the mountains, and sometimes the veins are of considerable extent. Jade is highly prized by the Chinese, who make it into personal ornaments, vases, and kindred articles. It is very hard, and admits of a high polish. Curiosity shops in China are abundantly supplied with specimens of jade-stone cut into many varieties of things, but the novice must be on his guard against deception. Jade-stone is imitated with wonderful cleverness, and a purchaser should always seek the aid of an expert before investing largely.

"Charchan and Lop are the modern Chachan and Lob, but our information about either of them is meagre. Lob is on the edge of the desert of Gobi, and about a hundred miles from Chachan. No European has visited either place in modern

times, and our knowledge is derived from the stories told by natives to English travellers at Yarkand and Kashgar. They all corroborate Marco's account, with due allowances for the changes which the centuries may have wrought.

"The phenomenon of voices and other strange sounds in the desert is not confined to this one region nor to Polo's time. The legend has existed in all ages and in all the lonely parts of the world; superstition has peopled every desert with demons,

Modern Travellers in the Desert of Gobi.

goblins, witches, and other supernatural creations, and not only the land, but the broad ocean, is said to abound in spirits good or evil. Perhaps," continued Fred, "we are none of us entirely free from it."

Some of the audience shook their heads, and indicated that they were not of the speaker's opinion.

"Well," said Fred, "let us have a test case. How many of this party will volunteer to go alone to-morrow night after nine

o'clock through the cemetery beyond the village along the road that leads through the swamp and back again? It 's a walk of about a mile each way, and a very lonely one."

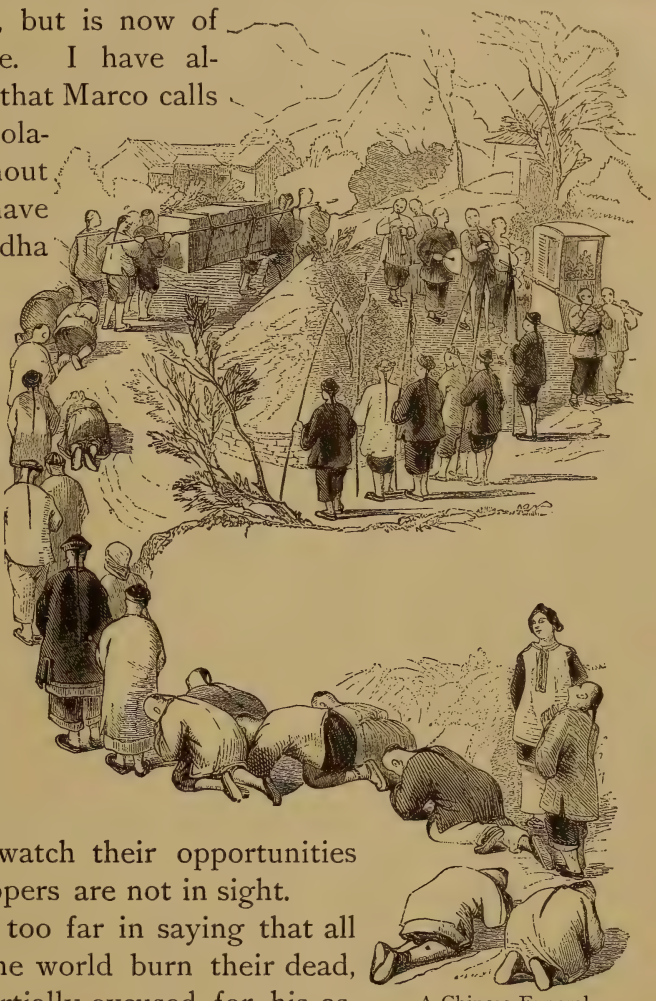
Somehow his remark did not seem to be distinctly understood. At any rate nobody responded to his inquiry, and the subject was dropped with a brief explanation from Fred that the whirling of the sand in the wind frequently caused strange sounds in the desert, and it was easy enough to magnify them into the beating of drums or the notes of musical instruments.

Buddhist Idols in a Chinese Temple.

It was also well known that the mirage in the desert caused remarkable optical effects; it causes lakes, rivers, mountains, cities, and forests to appear where there is only a wide waste of sand, and frequently it represented phantom caravans and armies marching through the scene of desolation. In the ages when superstition prevailed, it is no wonder that the story told by Marco of the great desert of Lop, or Gobi, was received without hesitation.

"But safely across the desert in spite of its goblins and

dangers we come to Tangut, which was the Mongol name of the Chinese province of Kansuh. Sachiu stands for Shachau, or 'sand-district,' which was a Chinese outpost on the frontier of the great desert, but is now of little consequence. I have already mentioned that Marco calls the Buddhists idolaters, and not without reason, as they have the idol of Buddha in their temples. They have lamisaries or convents filled with priests, and their sacrifices and modes of worship are the same to-day as in Polo's time. The priests pretend that the idol eats the food set before him, when in reality it is devoured by his guardians, who watch their opportunities when the worshippers are not in sight.



A Chinese Funeral.

"Marco goes too far in saying that all the idolaters in the world burn their dead, but he can be partially excused for his assertion when we remember that the world of that time was much smaller than it is to-day.

"Many of the ceremonies he describes," Fred continued, "are really Chinese, but it was natural for him to attribute them to Tangut, as it was here that he first met them. There were many

Chinese settlers on the borders of the great desert, and they had carried their customs with them. The practice of burning the dead has not prevailed in China for several centuries, and was probably given up on account of the growing scarcity and dearness of fuel. But if you read Doolittle's 'Social Life of the Chinese,' and other works describing their customs, you will find that many of the ceremonies mentioned by Marco have not changed in the least.

"Coffins are made in the way he tells us, and are kept a long time in the house. Paper horses, camels, and money are burned at funerals, and Mr. Doolittle says there are more than thirty establishments in Foo-Chow devoted to the sale of mock money."

"The idea is not by any means an original one with the Chinese," said Dr. Allen, interrupting the youth for a moment. "It symbolizes the custom of sacrificing human beings and valuable animals which still prevails in some parts of the world, especially in the interior of Africa. We read that the ancient Egyptians had human sacrifices at funerals, but one of the kings abolished the custom and substituted images of wax or wood. In some parts of China they make holes in the walls of the houses for carrying out the dead, and sometimes they have a special door for that purpose, known as 'The Door of the Dead.' These doors were formerly in use in Holland and Central Italy, and may be seen to-day in old buildings in those countries."

"The Chinese are not the only superstitious people in the world," Frank remarked as the doctor sat down.

"It is an old saying," responded the doctor, "that superstition is what others believe, and religion is what we believe. Many of our customs will appear as odd to the Chinese as theirs do to us. The more knowledge we have of the world, the more we learn to respect the ways of others. But we will drop the discussion and hear what Frank has to read in continuation of the story."

On this suggestion Frank rose and proceeded with the story.

OF THE PROVINCE OF CAMUL.

CAMUL is a province which in former days was a kingdom. It contains numerous towns and villages, but the chief city bears the name of CAMUL. The province lies between two deserts; for on the one side is the Great Desert of Lop, and on the other side is a small desert of three days' journey in extent. The people are all Idolaters, and have a peculiar language. They live by the fruits of the earth, which they have in plenty, and dispose of to travellers. They are a people who take things very easily, for they mind nothing but playing and singing, and dancing and enjoying themselves.

OF THE PROVINCE OF CHINGINTALAS.

CHINGINTALAS is also a province at the verge of the Desert, and lying between north-west and north. It has an extent of sixteen days' journey, and belongs to the Great Kaan, and contains numerous towns and villages. There are three different races of people in it—Idolaters, Saracens, and some Nestorian Christians. At the northern extremity of this province there is a mountain in which are excellent veins of steel and ondanique. And you must know that in the same mountain there is a vein of the substance from which Salamander is made. For the real truth is that the Salamander is no beast, as they allege in our part of the world, but is a substance found in the earth; and I will tell you about it.

Everybody must be aware that it can be no animal's nature to live in fire, seeing that every animal is composed of all the four elements. Now I, Marco Polo, had a Turkish acquaintance of the name of Zurficar, and he was a very clever fellow. And this Turk related how he had lived three years in that region on behalf of the Great Kaan, in order to procure those Salamanders for him. He said that the way they got them was by digging in that mountain till they found a certain vein. The substance of this vein was then taken and crushed, and when so treated it divides as it were into fibres of wool, which they set forth to dry. When dry, these fibres were pounded in a great copper mortar, and then washed, so as to remove all the earth, and to leave only the fibres

like fibres of wool. These were then spun, and made into napkins. When first made, these napkins are not very white, but by putting them into the fire for a while they come out as white as snow. And so again whenever they become dirty they are bleached by being put in the fire.

Now this, and nought else, is the truth about the Salamander, and the people of the country all say the same. Any other account of the matter is fabulous nonsense. And I may add that they have at Rome a napkin of this stuff, which the Grand Kaan sent to the Pope to make a wrapper for the Holy Sudarium of Jesus Christ.

OF THE PROVINCE OF SUKCHUR.

On leaving the province of which I spoke before, you ride ten days between north-east and east, and in all that way you find no human dwelling, or next to none, so that there is nothing for our book to speak of.

At the end of those ten days you come to another province called SUKCHUR, in which there are numerous towns and villages. The chief city is called SUKCHU. The people are partly Christians and partly Idolaters, and all are subject to the Great Kaan.

The great General Province to which all these three provinces belong is called TANGUT.

Over all the mountains of this province rhubarb is found in great abundance, and thither merchants come to buy it, and carry it thence all over the world. Travellers, however, dare not visit those mountains with any cattle but those of the country, for a certain plant grows there which is so poisonous that cattle which eat it lose their hoofs. The cattle of the country know it and eschew it. The people live by agriculture, and have not much trade. They are of a brown complexion. The whole of the province is healthy.

OF THE CITY OF CAMPICHU.

CAMPICHU is also a city of Tangut, and a very great and noble one. Indeed it is the capital and place of government of the whole province of Tangut. The people are Idolaters, Saracens, and Christians, and the latter have three very fine churches in the city, whilst the Idolaters have

many minsters and abbeys after their fashion. In these they have an enormous number of idols, both small and great, certain of the latter being a good ten paces in stature; some of them being of wood, others of clay, and others yet of stone. They are all highly polished, and then covered with gold. The great idols of which I speak lie at length. And round about them there are other figures of considerable size, as if adoring and paying homage before them.

Now, as I have not yet given you particulars about the customs of these Idolaters, I will proceed to tell you about them.

You must know that there are among them certain religious recluses who lead a more virtuous life than the rest. They have an Ecclesiastical Calendar as we have; and there are five days in the month that they observe particularly; and on these five days they would on no account either slaughter any animal or eat flesh meat. On those days, moreover, they observe much greater abstinence altogether than on other days.

Roadside Temple in Northern China.

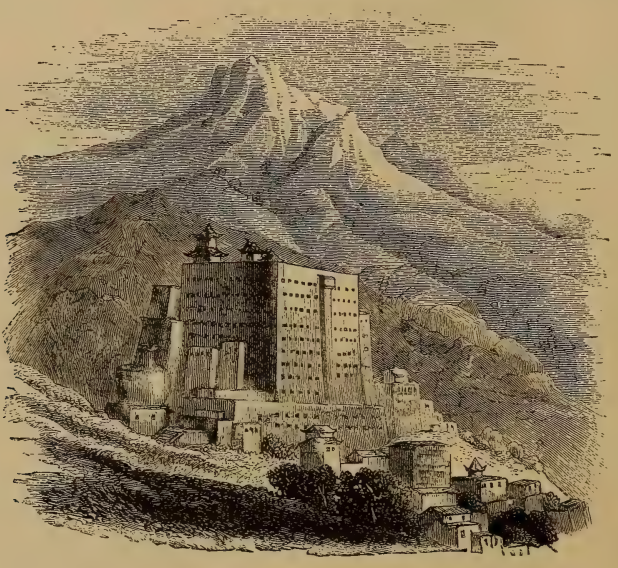
Among these people a man may take thirty wives, more or less, if he can but afford to do so, each having wives in proportion to his wealth and means; but the first wife is always held in highest consideration. The men endow their wives with cattle, slaves, and money, according to their ability. And if a man dislikes any one of his wives, he just turns her off and takes another.

Messer Maffeo and Messer Marco Polo dwelt a whole year in this city when on a mission.

OF THE CITY OF ETZINA.

When you leave the city of Campichu you ride for twelve days, and then reach a city called ETZINA, which is toward the north on the verge

of the Sandy Desert; it belongs to the Province of Tangut. The people are Idolaters, and possess plenty of camels and cattle, and the country produces a number of good falcons, both Sakers and Lanners. The inhabitants live by their cultivation and their cattle, for they have no trade. At this city you must needs lay in victuals for forty days, because when you quit Etzina you enter on a desert which extends forty days' journey to the north, and on which you meet with no habitation nor baiting-place. In the summer-time, indeed, you will fall in with people, but in the winter the cold is too great. You also meet with wild beasts



Grand Lama Monastery.

(for there are some small pine-woods here and there), and with numbers of wild asses. When you have travelled these forty days across the Desert you come to a certain province lying to the north. Its name you shall hear presently.

OF THE CITY OF CARACORON.

CARACORON is a city of some three miles in compass. It is surrounded by a strong earthen rampart, for stone is scarce there. And beside it there is a great citadel wherein is a fine palace in which the Governor resides. 'T is the first city that the Tartars possessed after

they issued from their own country. And now I will tell you all about how they first acquired dominion and spread over the world.

Originally the Tartars dwelt in the north on the borders of CHORCHA. Their country was one of great plains; and there were no towns or villages in it, but excellent pasture-lands, with great rivers and many sheets of water; in fact it was a very fine and extensive region. But there was no sovereign in the land. They did, however, pay tax and tribute to a great prince who was called in their tongue UNC CAN, the same that we call Prester John, him in fact about whose great dominion all the world talks. The tribute he had of them was one beast out of every ten, and also a tithe of all their other gear.

Now it came to pass that the Tartars multiplied exceedingly. And when Prester John saw how great a people they had become, he began to fear that he should have trouble from them. So he made a scheme to distribute them over sundry countries, and sent one of his Barons to carry this out. When the Tartars became aware of this they took it much amiss, and with one consent they left their country and went off across a desert to a distant region toward the north, where Prester John could not get at them to annoy them. Thus they revolted from his authority and paid him tribute no longer. And so things continued for a time.

"I will pause here," said Frank, "as we are about to hear of the customs of the Tartars, and receive an introduction to Kublai Khan, which we had better postpone until the next meeting. What I have just read will be enough to occupy us for the remainder of this evening."

Fred called attention to the province of Camul, and said the brief description was doubtless owing to the fact that Marco is not likely to have visited it, but obtained his information from his father and uncle, who may have gone there in their previous journey. "It stands," said he, "on an oasis in the desert, and is carefully cultivated by means of water carried through artificial canals, and drawn from reservoirs, where it is stored during the seasons of rains. It is famous for its rice, grapes, and

melons, and is still a place of considerable importance, as it stands at the junction of two great roads leading from China into Central Asia.

"Chingintalas is also supposed to be described from hearsay, as its identification has not been settled by the geographers. By mines of Salamanders, Marco undoubtedly refers to mines of asbestos, a mineral that is found in a good many parts of the world."

"And does it really possess the properties he described?" said one of the listening youths.

A Town in an Oasis.

"We will call on Dr. Allen to tell us," said Fred in reply. The doctor, with his usual good nature, proceeded to answer the question.

"The fable concerning the ability of the Salamander to pass through fire without injury is of very ancient origin," said he, "and was generally believed until comparatively recent times. Occasionally you will now find believers in it, but the number is growing more scarce every year. And now a word about asbestos.

"It is a mineral substance composed chiefly of silica, mag-

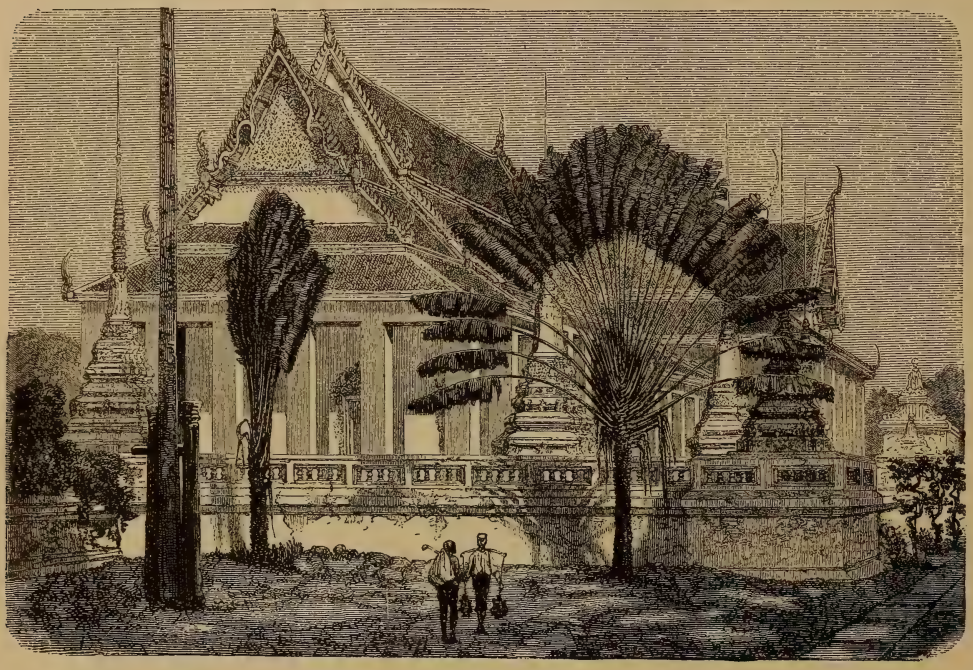
nesia, lime, and oxide of iron, and is of a fine fibrous character. Sometimes the fibres are in a compact mass, and at others they are distinct and easily pulled apart. There is one kind called *rock-cork*, which will float in water. The asbestos, with fibres that can be easily separated, is called *amianthus*, and it is from this variety that cloth is made. It can be spun into thread and woven in a loom, and such cloth is indestructible in an ordinary fire. A towel or napkin of this material can be cleansed by throwing it upon the fire, but if the heat is very great, the material may be calcined or converted into lime, so that it will crumble when cooled and handled again. The ancients used cloth of asbestos for wrapping bodies that were burned on funeral piles, in order to preserve the ashes, and asbestos is largely used to-day in wrapping steam pipes, and for fire-proof roofing and the filling of safes. Gloves for handling hot iron are made of it, but they are not in general use. The finest varieties of asbestos are from Northern Italy, but the mines are not extensive."

As the doctor concluded his remarks, Fred continued.

"By Sukchu," said he, "it is beyond a reasonable doubt that Marco referred to the modern Suhchau, which is in the north of China, and not far from the Great Wall. Rhubarb is carried from there to the central parts of the empire, and the sheep are occasionally poisoned by a plant which grows in the mountains. But there is a similar plant all through the mountains of India and Thibet, so that it does not designate the locality very clearly. There is something like it in the New England States; lambs are occasionally poisoned by it, but the older sheep seem to understand its peculiarities and avoid it. According to one traveller there is a plain in Northern Thibet, which produces nothing but this grass which is fatal to cattle and therefore, it is avoided by all horsemen.

"Campichu stands for Kanchau which was, in Polo's day, the chief city of the province of Kansuh or Tangut. The description of the great idol 'lying at length,' indicates very clearly that he was speaking of a recumbent figure of Buddha. We will again rely on the doctor to inform us on the subject."

"Recumbent figures of Buddha are quite common in Buddhist countries," said the doctor, in compliance with the request for information, "and they are supposed to represent Buddha entering Nirvana, or the condition of eternal repose. The largest of the kind I ever saw was in the 'Temple of the Sleeping Idol' at Bangkok, in Siam. The figure is one hundred and sixty feet long and lies on its side; the soles of the feet are three and a



Siamese Temple of Buddha.

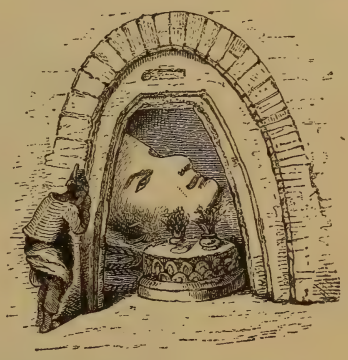
half yards long and broad in proportion, and each of them is inlaid with mother-of-pearl as delicately as though it were a brooch or a finger ring. The figures represented by this inlaid work are entirely fruits and flowers, in accordance with the fable that fruits and flowers sprung from the earth wherever Buddha planted his footsteps."

Some one asked what this statue was made of.

"It was constructed of brick" was the reply, "and then heavily

gilded so that one might easily suppose it to be made of gold. This idol is not by any means the only one in the temple. At a fair estimate I should say there were a thousand others of various sizes, and packed so closely together that there could hardly be room for more.

"The fasting and other observances described by Marco are not greatly changed in the centuries that have passed since his travels were made. Fast days are a part of the religion of the country and not unlike those observed by the Catholic Church. I am reminded of a remark made by a Russian peasant to an Englishman travelling through Siberia. He had told the peasant that the English people did not observe fast days, whereupon the peasant replied: "You are worse than the heathen. The Moslem has his fast days and the Buddhist has his; even the wretched Pagan Samoyedes do the same way, but you English will eat meat every day in the year."



Head of Colossal Buddha.

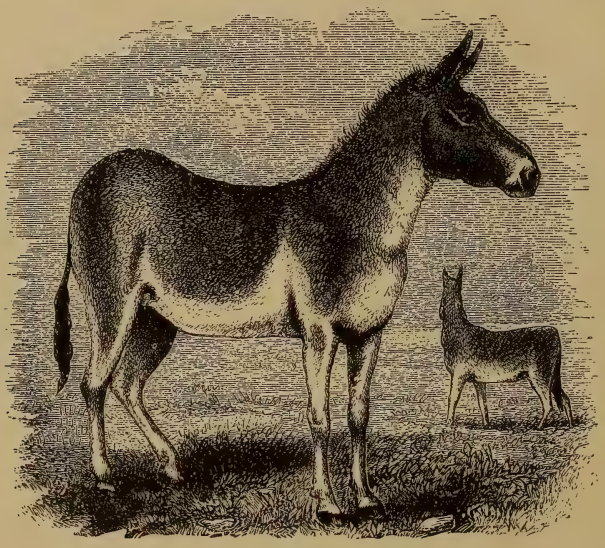
"Wild asses are still found in Mongolia," said Fred, continuing his commentaries, "and the desert has not changed in any material degree since Polo traversed it. Etzina and Caracoran are not clearly located, though they appear on ancient maps, and there are various traditions concerning them. At any rate, there are no such cities in existence to-day.

"Now we come to Prester John, whose name has long figured in history, and who was firmly believed in by the whole of Europe for three or four centuries. He was first heard of in the eleventh century, and was supposed to be an Eastern potentate dwelling somewhere in Northern Asia who had been converted to Christianity in a miraculous way. He was both ruler and priest, and his name Prester was supposed to be an abbreviation of Presbyter. In the thirteenth century the story made him identical with Ung Khan, a Tartar prince, living in Karakorum, who was overthrown

and killed by Genghis Khan. Several missions were sent at different times to find Prester John, but all were in vain ; the last was as late as the fifteenth century, and like the rest it ended in disappointment."

"And was there really no such ruler in existence at any time?" asked one of the audience.

"There is no proof of his existence or of his kingdom," was the reply. "Some writers have thought he might have been identical with the Grand Lama or High-Priest of Buddhism, while



Wild Ass of Mongolia.

others have conjectured that a Nestorian priest may somehow have obtained possession of a throne in Tartary and transmitted the title and name to his successors. It is entirely certain that there is no one to-day bearing the distinction."

"Leaving you to meditate upon one of the myths of history," said the president, "I declare the meeting adjourned." In a few minutes the assemblage had dispersed with eager anticipations for the next meeting, when they were to hear something about the Tartars and the Great Khan of Tartary.

CHAPTER VIII.

Genghis Khan—His Career and Conquests—Battle Between Him and Prester John—Customs of the Tartars in War and Peace—Their Military Organization—Kumiss and How It Is Made—Dried Milk Among the Tartars—"Travellers' Tales."

"ALTHOUGH there are grave doubts whether Prester John ever existed," said Frank at the opening of the next session of the Society, "we will hear what Marco has to say about the wars between that ruler and the more famous Genghis Khan. That the latter was a real personage there is no question, for he led his armies to a career of conquest which did not end until they reached Central Europe. Many of the descendants of his people are now living in Russia, and it is less than three hundred years since the Tartar kingdom of Kazan on the banks of the Volga, came to an end."

With this preliminary remark he opened the volume and read as follows:

OF CHINGHIS, AND HOW HE BECAME THE FIRST KAAN OF THE TARTARS.

Now it came to pass in the year 1187 that the Tartars made them a King whose name was CHINGHIS KAAN. He was a man of great worth, and of great ability, eloquence, and valor. And as soon as the news that he had been chosen King was spread abroad through those countries, all the Tartars in the world came to him and owned him for their Lord. And right well did he maintain the Sovereignty they had given him. What shall I say? The Tartars gathered to him in astonishing multitude, and when he saw such numbers he made a great furniture of spears and arrows and such other arms as they used, and set about the conquest of all those regions till he had conquered eight provinces. When he conquered a province he did no harm to the people or their property, but

merely established some of his own men in the country along with a proportion of theirs, whilst he led the remainder to the conquest of other provinces. And when those whom he had conquered became aware how well and safely he protected them against all others, and how they suffered no ill at his hands, and saw what a noble prince he was, then they joined him heart and soul and became his devoted followers. And when he had thus gathered such a multitude that they seemed to cover the earth, he began to think of conquering a great part of the world. Now in the year 1200 he sent an embassy to Prester John, and desired to have his daughter to wife. But when Prester John heard that Chinghis Kaan demanded his daughter in marriage he waxed very wroth, and said to the Envoys: "What impudence is this, to ask my daughter to wife! Wist he not well that he was my liegeman and serf? Get ye back to him and tell him that I had liever set my daughter in the fire than give her in marriage to him, and that he deserves death at my hand, rebel and traitor that he is!" So he bade the Envoys begone at once, and never come into his presence again. The Envoys, on receiving this reply, departed straightway, and made haste to their master, and related all that Prester John had ordered them to say, keeping nothing back.

Tartar Girls.

HOW CHINGHIS MUSTERED HIS PEOPLE TO MARCH AGAINST PRESTER JOHN.

When Chinghis Kaan heard the brutal message that Prester John had sent him, such rage seized him that his heart came nigh to bursting within him, for he was a man of a very lofty spirit. At last he spoke, and that so loud that all who were present could hear him: "Never more might he be prince if he took not revenge for the brutal message of Prester John, and such revenge that insult never in this world was so dearly paid for. And before long Prester John should know whether he were his serf or no!"

So then he mustered all his forces, and levied such a host as never before was seen or heard of, sending word to Prester John to be on his defence. And when Prester John had sure tidings that Chinghis was really coming against him with such a multitude, he still professed to treat it as a jest and a trifle, for, quoth he, "these be no soldiers." Natheless he marshalled his forces and mustered his people, and made great preparations, in order that if Chinghis did come, he might take him and put him to death. In fact he marshalled such an host of many different nations that it was a world's wonder.

And so both sides gat them ready to battle. Chinghis Kaan with all his host arrived at a vast and beautiful plain which was called TANDUC, belonging to Prester John, and there he pitched his camp ; and so great was the multitude of his people that it was impossible to number them. And when he got tidings that Prester John was coming, he rejoiced greatly, for the place afforded a fine and ample battle-ground, so he was right glad to tarry for him there, and greatly longed for his arrival.

HOW PRESTER JOHN MARCHED TO MEET CHINGHIS.

Now the story goes that when Prester John became aware that Chinghis with his host was marching against him, he went forth to meet him with all his forces, and advanced until he reached the same plain of Tanduc, and pitched his camp over against that of Chinghis Kaan, at a distance of twenty miles. And then both armies remained at rest for two days that they might be fresher and heartier for battle.

So when the two great hosts were pitched on the plains of Tanduc as you have heard, Chinghis Kaan one day summoned before him his astrologers, both Christians and Saracens, and desired them to let him know which of the two hosts would gain the battle, his own or Prester John's. The Saracens tried to ascertain, but were unable to give a true answer; the Christians, however, did give a true answer, and showed manifestly beforehand how the event should be. For they got a cane and split it lengthwise, and laid one half on this side and one half on that, allowing no one to touch the pieces. And one piece of cane they called *Chinghis Kaan*, and the other piece they called *Prester John*. And then they said to Chinghis : "Now mark! and you will see the event of

the battle, and who shall have the best of it; for whose cane soever shall get above the other, to him shall victory be." He replied that he would fain see it, and bade them begin. Then the Christian astrologers read a Psalm out of the Psalter, and went through other incantations. And lo! whilst all were beholding, the cane that bore the name of Chinghis Kaan, without being touched by any body, advanced to the other that bore the name of Prester John, and got on the top of it. When the Prince saw that, he was greatly delighted, and seeing how in this matter he found the Christians to tell the truth, he always treated them with great respect, and held them for men of truth forever after.

THE BATTLE BETWEEN CHINGHIS KAAN AND PRESTER JOHN.

And after both sides had rested well those two days, they armed for the fight and engaged in desperate combat; and it was the greatest battle that ever was seen. The numbers that were slain on both sides were very great, but in the end Chinghis Kaan obtained the victory. And in the battle Prester John was slain. And from that time forward, day by day, his kingdom passed into the hands of Chinghis Kaan till the whole was conquered.

I may tell you that Chinghis Kaan reigned six years after this battle, engaged continually in conquest, and taking many a province and city and stronghold. But at the end of those six years he went against a certain castle that was called CAAJU, and there he was shot with an arrow in the knee, so that he died of his wound. A great pity it was, for he was a valiant man and a wise.

"According to the Persian historians," said Fred, "Temujin was born in the year 1155, but the Chinese writers make the date of his birth 1162. He became sovereign under the name of Genghis Khan in 1202 or 1206. The Persians give the former date and the Chinese the latter. A few years make no practical difference with an event so far away, and there is no occasion to discuss the subject further.

"His father was chief of a tribe of Tartars, and the son succeeded him at the age of fourteen. He immediately made war

upon neighboring tribes, and from that time to the end of his life, in 1227, he was almost constantly engaged in schemes of conquest. His armies overran China, Central Asia, Persia, and Russia, and it is estimated that in the course of his wars he must have caused the deaths of five or six millions of people. Contrary to what Polo asserts, his conquests were marked by the most terrible cruelty even for those times, but he seems to have possessed a liberal spirit in spite of his barbarity. He made a code of laws which is still known by his name among the Mongols, tolerated all religions, exempted priests and physicians of all kinds from taxation, and established such a thorough system of police that a man could travel in safety from one end to the other of his dominions. At his death his empire was divided among his four sons, who continued his conquests and carried their banners to the banks of the Oder and the Danube.

"If you wish to know more of this great conqueror," Fred continued, "you can find it in the histories; I could give you more, but don't wish to run the risk of being tedious."

"Do you suppose it is true," one of the youths inquired, "that he consulted his astrologers to decide how his battle with Prester John was likely to end?"

"It is quite probable," was the reply, "as it was the custom of the times to consult the oracles before undertaking any thing of the sort. Divination by rods is a very ancient practice; it has come down to our day, and consequently the story is not improbable. It is not unusual to hear of a man tossing a penny in the air to decide a troublesome question, and all over China at the present time the people go to the temples and practise divination by means of sticks, which they throw in front of the altars and observe how they fall. Fortune-tellers are common in the streets of Chinese cities, and drive a profitable business; fortune-telling is not unknown in the most enlightened countries of the world, and there is no ground for doubting that it was in fashion in the country and times of Genghis Khan.

"It is probable," said Fred with a smile, "that the astrologers

who prophesied the result of the battle between Genghis Khan and Prester John had a regard for the safety of their own heads. If they had predicted defeat instead of victory, it is quite likely their lives would have paid the forfeit. They understood how to be on the popular side, and governed the movements of the sticks accordingly.

A Chinese Fortune-Teller.

"The locality of the great battle is not well established, but the prevailing belief of writers who have studied the subjects puts it near the modern city of Urga in Mongolia. That there was a Tartar ruler named Ung Khan is pretty well established, but we are not so sure that he was the Prester John whose history is considered mythical. Let us hear what Frank has to read us in the next chapters."

OF THOSE WHO DID REIGN AFTER CHINGHIS KAAN, AND OF THE CUSTOMS OF THE TARTARS.

Now, the next that reigned after Chinghis Kaan, their first Lord, was CUY KAAN, and the third Prince was BATUY KAAN, and the fourth was ALACOU KAAN, the fifth MONGOU KAAN, the sixth CUBLAY KAAN, who is the sovereign now reigning, and is more potent than any of the five who went before him; in fact, if you were to take all those five together, they would not be so powerful as he is. Nay, I will say yet more; for if

you were to put together all the Christians in the world, with their Emperors and their Kings, the whole of these Christians—aye, and throw in the Saracens to boot—would not have such power, or be able to do so much as this Cublay, who is the Lord of all the Tartars in the world, those of the Levant and of the Ponent included; for these are all his liegemen and subjects. I mean to show you all about this great power of his in this book of ours.

You should be told also that all the Grand Kaans, and all the descendants of Chinghis their first Lord, are carried to a mountain that is called ALTAY to be interred. Wheresoever the Sovereign may die, he is carried to his burial in that mountain with his predecessors; no matter, an the place of his death were 100 days' journey distant, thither must he be carried to his burial.

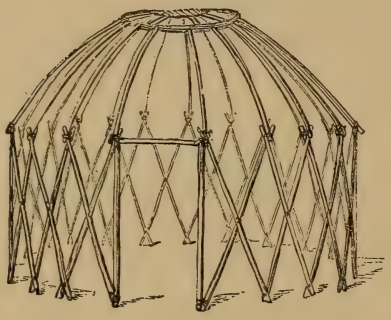
Let me tell you a strange thing too. When they are carrying the body of any Emperor to be buried with the others, the convoy that goes with the body doth put to the sword all whom they fall in with on the road, saying: "Go and wait upon your Lord in the other world!" For they do in sooth believe that all such as they slay in this manner do go to serve their Lord in the other world. They do the same too with horses; for when the Emperor dies, they kill all his best horses, in order that he may have the use of them in the other world, as they believe. And I tell you as a certain truth, that when Mongou Kaan died, more than 20,000 persons, who chanced to meet the body on its way, were slain in the manner I have told.

CONCERNING THE CUSTOMS OF THE TARTARS.

Now that we have begun to speak of the Tartars, I have plenty to tell you on that subject. The Tartar custom is to spend the winter in warm plains, where they find good pasture for their cattle, whilst in summer they betake themselves to a cool climate among the mountains and valleys, where water is to be found as well as woods and pastures.

Their houses are circular, and are made of wands covered with felts. These are carried along with them whithersoever they go; for the wands are so strongly bound together, and likewise so well combined, that the frame can be made very light. Whenever they erect these huts the door

is always to the south. They also have wagons covered with black felt so efficaciously that no rain can get in. These are drawn by oxen and camels, and the women and children travel in them. The women do the buying and selling, and whatever is necessary to provide for the husband and household; for the men all lead the life of gentlemen, troubling themselves about nothing but hunting and hawking, and looking after their goshawks and falcons, unless it be the practice of warlike exercises.



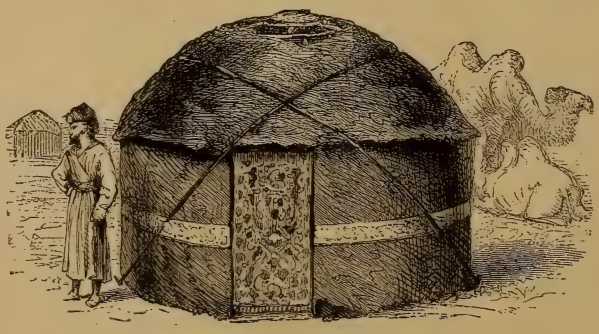
Framework of an Asiatic Tent.

They live on the milk and meat which their herds supply, and on the produce of the chase; and they eat all kinds of flesh, including that of horses and dogs, and Pharaoh's rats, of which last there are great numbers in burrows on those plains. Their drink is mare's milk.

The marriage customs of Tartars are as follows. Any man may take a hundred wives an he so please, and if he be able to keep them. But the first wife is ever held most in honor, and the same applies to her sons. The husband gives a marriage payment to his wife's mother, and the wife brings nothing to her husband. Their weddings are celebrated with great ado.

CONCERNING THE GOD OF THE TARTARS.

This is the fashion of their religion. They say there is a Most High God of Heaven, whom they worship daily with thurible and incense, but they pray to Him only for health of mind and body. But they have also a certain other god of theirs called NATIGAY, and they say he is the god of the Earth, who watches over their children, cattle, and crops. They show



The Tent Completed.

him great worship and honor, and every man hath a figure of him in his house, made of felt and cloth; and they also make in the same manner images of his wife and children. The wife they put on the left hand, and the children in front. And when they eat, they take the fat of the meat and grease the god's mouth withal, as well as the mouths of his wife and children. Then they take of the broth and sprinkle it before the door of the house; and that done, they deem that their god and his family have had their share of the dinner.

Their drink is mare's milk, prepared in such a way that you would take it for white wine; and a right good drink it is, called by them *Kemiz*.

The clothes of the wealthy Tartars are for the most part of gold and silk stuffs, lined with costly furs, such as sable and ermine, vair and fox-skin, in the richest fashion.

CONCERNING THE TARTAR CUSTOMS OF WAR.

All their harness of war is excellent and costly. Their arms are bows and arrows, sword and mace; but above all the bow, for they are capital archers, indeed the best that are known. On their backs they wear armor of cuirbouly, prepared from buffalo and other hides, which is very strong. They are excellent soldiers, and passing valiant in battle. They are also more capable of hardships than other nations; for many a time, if need be, they will go for a month without any supply of food, living only on the milk of their mares and on such game as their bows may win them. Their horses also will subsist entirely on the grass of the plains, so that there is no need to carry store of barley or straw or oats; and they are very docile to their riders. These, in case of need, will abide on horseback the livelong night, armed at all points, while the horse will be continually grazing.

Interior of a Tent.

Of all troops in the world these are they which endure the greatest hardship and fatigue, and which cost the least; and they are the best of all for making wide conquests of country. And this you will perceive from what you have heard and shall hear in this book; and (as a fact) there can be no manner of doubt that now they are the masters of the biggest half of the world. Their troops are admirably ordered in the manner that I shall now relate.

You see, when a Tartar prince goes forth to war, he takes with him, say, 100,000 horse. Well, he appoints an officer to every ten men, one to

Khivan Tartars Returning from a Raid. Receiving Payment for Heads of Victims.

every hundred, one to every thousand, and one to every ten thousand, so that his own orders have to be given to ten persons only, and each of these ten persons has to pass the orders only to other ten, and so on; no one having to give orders to more than ten. And every one in turn is responsible only to the officer immediately over him; and the discipline and order that comes of this method is marvellous, for they are a people very obedient to their chiefs. Further, they call the corps of 100,000 men a *Tuc;* that of 10,000 they call a *Toman;* the thousand they call

Miny; the hundred *Guz;* the ten *On.* And when the army is on the march they have always 200 horsemen, very well mounted, who are sent a distance of two marches in advance to reconnoitre, and these always keep a-head. They have a similar party detached in the rear, and on either flank, so that there is a good look-out kept on all sides against a surprise. When they are going on a distant expedition they take no gear with them except two leather bottles for milk, a little earthenware pot to cook their meat in, and a little tent to shelter them from rain. And in case of great urgency they will ride ten days without lighting a fire or taking a meal. On such an occasion they will sustain themselves on the blood of their horses, opening a vein and letting the blood jet into their mouths, drinking till they have had enough, and then staunching it.

They also have milk dried into a kind of paste to carry with them; and when they need food they put this in water, and beat it up till it dissolves, and then drink it. It is prepared in this way: they boil the milk, and when the rich part floats on the top they skim it into another vessel, and of that they make butter; for the milk will not become solid till this is removed. Then they put the milk in the sun to dry. And when they go on an expedition, every man takes some ten pounds of this dried milk with him. And of a morning he will take a half pound of it and put it in his leather bottle, with as much water as he pleases. So, as he rides along, the milk-paste and the water in the bottle get well churned together into a kind of pap, and that makes his dinner.

When they come to an engagement with the enemy, they will gain the victory in this fashion. They never let themselves get into a regular medley, but keep perpetually riding round and shooting into the enemy. And as they do not count it any shame to run away in battle, they will sometimes pretend to do so, and in running away they turn in the saddle and shoot hard and strong at the foe, and in this way make great havoc. Their horses are trained so perfectly that they will double hither and thither, just like a dog, in a way that is quite astonishing. Thus they fight to as good purpose in running away as if they stood and faced the enemy, because of the vast volleys of arrows that they shoot in this way, turning round upon their pursuers, who are fancying that they have won the battle. But when the Tartars see that they have killed and wounded

a good many horses and men, they wheel round bodily, and return to the charge in perfect order and with loud cries; and in a very short time the enemy are routed. In truth they are stout and valiant soldiers, and inured to war. And you perceive that it is just when the enemy sees them run, and imagines that he has gained the battle, that he has in reality lost it; for the Tartars wheel round in a moment when they judge the right time has come. And after this fashion they have won many a fight.

All this that I have been telling you is true of the manners and customs of the genuine Tartars. But I must add also that in these days they are greatly degenerated; for those who are settled in Cathay have taken up the practices of the Idolaters of the country, and have abandoned their own institutions; whilst those who have settled in the Levant have adopted the customs of the Saracens.

"Marco is not correct in his history of the successors of Genghis Khan," said Fred, as soon as Frank sat down. "He omits Okkodai, who was the immediate successor of Genghis, and names at least two who had no prominence at all. But Kublai was the fifth in regular order, and as we are not much interested in the rest of the family, we will excuse our traveller.

"The burial-place of Genghis has not been identified, but is supposed to have been on a mountain near Urga in Mongolia. The barbarities related of the funeral ceremonies of the Tartar emperors are denied by several writers, and for the sake of humanity let us hope the stories are not true."

"Unfortunately they seem to be fairly well founded," said the doctor, by way of explanation; "and in some of the Tartar tribes it is still the custom to slaughter horses, sheep, and other domestic animals at the funeral of their late owner. Human sacrifices at funerals are still the fashion with many African rulers, but through the influences of missionaries and others the custom is diminishing. Stanley, the African explorer, persuaded the king of Uganda to abolish human sacrifices, and other travellers have accomplished the same results in the kingdoms of Ashantee and Dahomey; but I am afraid the followers of

Genghis Khan were controlled by the example he had set during his lifetime, and above all by whatever superstition may have belonged to his period."

"But let us come to something more agreeable," said Fred, when the doctor had finished. "The Tartar custom of spending the winter on the plains, and the summer in the mountains, is the same now as of yore. I have already told you of the moving of the flocks and herds in search of pasture. Of course such a

A Tartar Prince Entering a City.

wandering people cannot have permanent houses, but must dwell in tents. These tents are in use in all parts of Central Asia, and as far as the extreme north of China. Dr. Allen will tell you he has seen them in Siberia, and that the people of Tartar descent often prefer them to houses of wood or stone as permanent habitations.

"The Tartar tent is made as Polo describes, with a light framework covered with felt. The size of the tent depends upon the wealth of the owner, and the extent of his family. Trav-

ellers have described tents forty or fifty feet in diameter, but they are generally not more than fifteen or twenty. It is usually the custom to arrange the tents with the doors to the south, but in the regions bordering the Altai Mountains, where the prevailing winds are from the west, the door faces the east. In the Middle Ages the Tartars had large tents or pavilions mounted on wheels, as described by Polo, but they do not appear to be in use at present. One writer tells of a tent of this sort

Mediæval Tartar Huts and Wagons.

where the wheels of the wagon were twenty feet apart, and the vehicle was drawn by twenty-two oxen, eleven abreast. The only carts in Tartar countries at present are mounted on two wheels, and drawn by a single ox, horse, or camel, generally the last. Sometimes two animals may be harnessed tandem, but it is not usually the case.

"They eat the same kind of food now as in former times, and it is fair to say that in this respect they have not changed at all."

"But do they really eat horses and dogs?" inquired one of the audience.

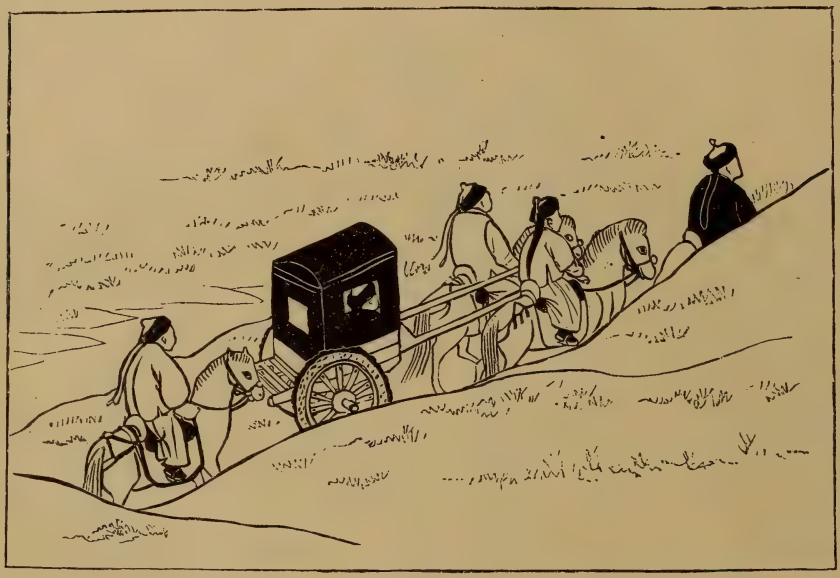
"Yes," answered Fred, "but they are not over fond of the latter, and only eat them when other food cannot be obtained. As for horseflesh they have not the slightest prejudice against it, any more than we have against beef or mutton. It is sold by their butchers, and at a grand festival it is sure to be one of the chief articles of diet. Dr. Allen can tell you an interesting story illustrating this peculiarity."

A Mongol Camp. (From a Native Drawing)

"When I was travelling through Siberia," said the doctor, in compliance with Fred's suggestion, "I overtook and passed a great many caravans laden with tea. They were made up of sleds, each drawn by one horse; there was a driver to every four or five sleds, and the drivers were mostly Siberian Tartars. When my sleigh came up they were obliged to give me the road, according to the rules of the country, and there was great hurrying to turn out. Once in turning out where the road was bad one of their horses broke his leg; the whole caravan halted, and I stopped to see what could be done about the matter. I gave

the driver sufficient money to compensate him for his loss ; in a very short time they distributed the load among half a dozen sleds, and attached the empty sled to another. Then they slaughtered the horse, cut up the flesh, and divided it among them. They seemed to congratulate themselves on the accident, as I had paid for the animal and provided them with the material for a feast."

"And now please tell us about Pharaoh's rats which the Tartars are said to eat," was the next request of the youth who had asked about the horses and dogs.



Mongol Cart Drawn by Two Horses. (From a Native Sketch.)

" Pharaoh's rat was probably the gerboa, or jerboa, which you will find described in works on natural history. He is noted for the great length of the hind legs and the extreme shortness of the fore legs ; the animal inhabits grassy plains and will live where the herbage is very scant, and he is found all over Central Asia, and in parts of Europe, Africa, and Australia. Gerboas burrow in the ground and are very destructive to crops of grain. The Arabs and many other people consider their flesh a great delicacy, and it is said to resemble that of the rabbit."

"The Tartars are said to have changed somewhat in their marriage customs," said Fred, "as they do not have the number of wives mentioned by Marco. Polygamy is not prohibited any more than in former days, but they have gradually reduced the size of their households, so that it is rare to find a Tartar with more than three or four wives. The old custom prevails of treating the first wife as the superior of the others. The marriage ceremonies vary in the different parts of the country. Among

Tartar Horse Race—Pursuit of a Bride.

some of the tribes it is the custom for the lover to pursue the bride on horseback; he is generally accompanied by several of his friends, who pretend to join in the race, though they are careful to keep a little behind him. She may ride away from him if she chooses, but as all the preliminaries have been arranged beforehand she is not likely to do so. Sometimes she carries the body of a lamb, which the bridegroom is expected to take from her during the chase."

"Kemiz or Kumiss is as famous a drink among the Tartars to-day as in the time of our great traveller," continued Fred. "The milk is fermented, and in this condition will keep a long time; it is usually kept in large bottles or bags made of horse-skin; that which is for daily use is in a sort of churn, which is frequently stirred by the members of the family. It has a high reputation for its medicinal qualities, and in the last few years it has been introduced into Europe and America. Many persons are said to have been cured of consumption by drinking kumiss. The tribes who use it are remarkably free from pulmonary disease, and it is said there is an establishment in the province of Orenburg where patients are treated with this diet.

Tartar Idols and Kumiss Churn.

"As to the Tartar mode of warfare, we may conclude that the description was accurate for the time it was made. But at the present day the Tartars are comparatively peaceful and occupied with their flocks and herds, though a good many of the tribes do not object to making raids upon their neighbors for purposes of plunder. They are fine horsemen, can travel long distances with very little food, and easily endure an amount of fatigue that would kill a soldier of any army of Europe. The story of their opening the veins of their horses and drinking the blood may be set down as fiction; it deserves a place by the side of the anecdote of the traveller who cut off his dog's tail to make a soup for himself, and gave the dog the bone."

There was a laugh all around at this quaint comparison, and as soon as it had ceased Fred proceeded.

"The dried milk or curd described by Marco is still in use in Tartar countries, and is an important article of food among the people of Badakshan and Afghanistan. It is not many years

since an American obtained a patent for a process of condensing milk, which was hailed as a new invention; if he had read the travels of Marco Polo, he would have found that the Tartars knew how to condense milk long before America was discovered.

"The organization of their armies and their modes of warfare were not unlike those of Oriental nations to-day. The Chinese and Japanese have long organized their forces upon the decimal system, and only changed it since they introduced European tactics. It was adopted by Genghis Khan, but was not original with him, as it appears in history centuries before his day. It may still be found in Central Asia and Turkey, as well as in the farther East.

Group of Kirghiz with Kumiss Bottle and Bowl.

"But I am now at the end of my notes," said Fred, "and must ask the favor of an adjournment."

The adjournment was voted unanimously, together with the thanks of the Society for the interesting explanations which Fred had made concerning the customs of the Tartars as described in the ancient narrative.

CHAPTER IX.

Tartar Customs—Administering Justice—Dead Persons Married to Each Other—The Country North of Tartary—Beasts and Birds—Summer Palaces of the Emperors—Uses of the Bamboo—Wonderful Tricks of Conjurors—Comparison Between Tartar and Indian Jugglers—A Chinese Knife-Thrower—Mongol Lamiseries.

"ACCORDING to an Irish song," Frank remarked, as he rose to his feet on the next evening, "there is luck in odd numbers. We are about to see how the Tartars were in the habit of regarding odd numbers in their modes of inflicting punishment."

With this suggestion of what was before them, he resumed the narrative.

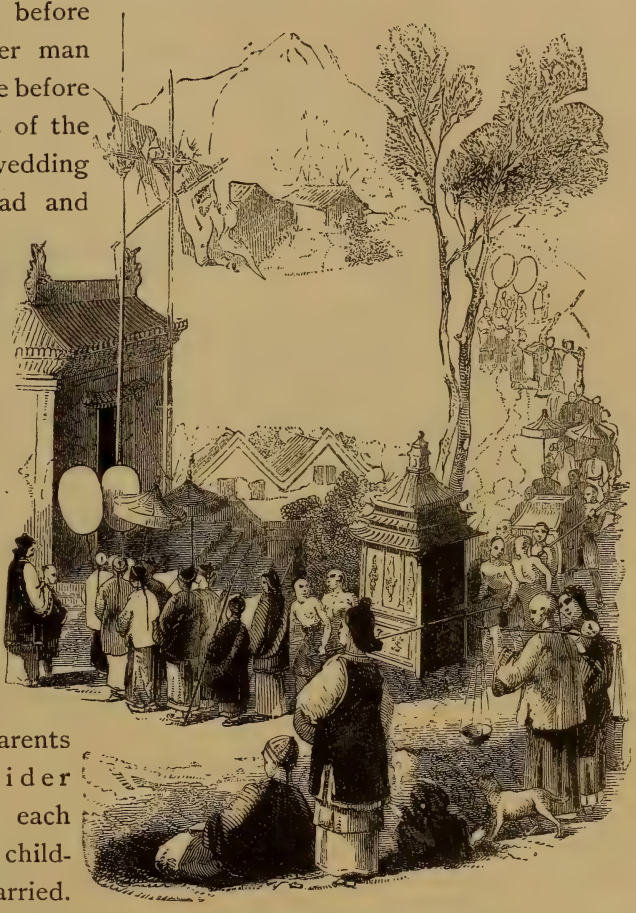
CONCERNING THE ADMINISTERING OF JUSTICE AMONG THE TARTARS.

The way they administer justice is this. When any one has committed a petty theft, they give him, under the orders of authority, seven blows of a stick, or seventeen, or twenty-seven, or thirty-seven, or forty-seven, and so forth, always increasing by tens in proportion to the injury done, and running up to one hundred and seven. Of these beatings sometimes they die. But if the offence be horse-stealing, or some other great matter, they cut the thief in two with a sword. Howbeit, if he be able to ransom himself by paying nine times the value of the thing stolen, he is let off. Every Lord or other person who possesses beasts has them marked with his peculiar brand, be they horses, mares, camels, oxen, cows, or other great cattle, and then they are sent abroad to graze over the plains without any keeper. They get all mixt together, but

Tartar Soldier of Western China.

eventually every beast is recovered by means of its owner's brand, which is known. For their sheep and goats they have shepherds. All their cattle are remarkably fine, big, and in good condition.

They have another notable custom, which is this. If any man have a daughter who dies before marriage, and another man have had a son also die before marriage, the parents of the two arrange a grand wedding between the dead lad and lass. And marry them they do, making a regular contract! And when the contract papers are made out they put them in the fire, in order (as they will have it) that the parties in the other world may know the fact, and so look on each other as man and wife. And the parents thenceforward consider themselves sib to each other, just as if their children had lived and married. Whatever may be agreed upon between the parties as dowry, those who have to pay it cause to be painted on pieces of paper, and then put these in the fire, saying that in that way the dead person will get all the real articles in the other world.



A Chinese Marriage Procession.

SUNDRY PARTICULARS OF THE PLAIN BEYOND CARACORON.

And when you leave Caracoron and the Altay, in which they bury the bodies of the Tartar Sovereigns, as I told you, you go north for forty days

till you reach a country called the PLAIN OF BARGU. The people there are called MESCRIPT; they are a very wild race, and live by their cattle, the most of which are stags, and these stags, I assure you, they use to ride upon. Their customs are like those of the Tartars, and they are subject to the Great Kaan. They have neither corn nor wine. They get birds for food, for the country is full of lakes and pools and marshes, which are much frequented by the birds when they are moulting, and when they have quite cast their feathers and can't fly, those people catch them. They also live partly on fish.

In the Country of Bargu.

And when you have travelled forty days over this great plain you come to the ocean, at the place where the mountains are in which the Peregrine falcons have their nests. And in those mountains it is so cold that you find neither man nor woman, nor beast nor bird, except one kind of bird called *Barguerlac*, on which the falcons feed. They are as big as partridges, and have feet like those of parrots and a tail like a swallow's, and are very strong in flight. And when the Grand Kaan wants Peregrines from the nest he sends thither to procure them. It is also on islands in that sea that the Gerfalcons are bred. You must know that the place is so far to the north that you leave the North Star some-

what behind you toward the south! The gerfalcons are so abundant there that the Emperor can have as many as he likes to send for. And you must not suppose that those gerfalcons which the Christians carry into the Tartar dominions go to the Great Kaan; they are carried only to the Prince of the Levant.

Now I have told you all about the provinces northward as far as the Ocean Sea, beyond which there is no more land at all; so I shall proceed to tell you of the other provinces on the way to the Great Kaan. Let us then return to that province of which I spoke before, called Campichu.

OF THE KINGDOM OF ERGUIUL AND PROVINCE OF SINJU.

On leaving Campichu, then, you travel five days across a tract in which many spirits are heard speaking in the night season; and at the end of those five marches, toward the east, you come to a kingdom called ERGUIUL, belonging to the Great Kaan. It is one of the several kingdoms which make up the great Province of Tangut. The people consist of Nestorian Christians, Idolaters, and worshippers of Mahommet.

There are plenty of cities in this kingdom, but the capital is ERGUIUL. You can travel in a south-easterly direction from this place into the province of Cathay. Should you follow that road to the south-east, you come to a city called SINJU, belonging also to Tangut, and subject to the Great Kaan, which has under it many towns and villages. The population is composed of Idolaters, and worshippers of Mahommet, but there are some Christians also. There are wild cattle in that country almost as big as elephants, splendid creatures, covered everywhere but on the back with shaggy hair a good four palms long. They are partly black, partly white, and really wonderfully fine creatures, and the hair or wool is extremely fine and white, finer and whiter than silk. Messer Marco brought some to Venice as a great curiosity, and so it was reckoned by those who saw it. There are also plenty of them tame, which have been caught young. These the people use commonly for burden and general work, and in the plough as well; and at the latter they will do full twice as much work as any other cattle, being such very strong beasts.

In this country, too, is found the best musk in the world; and I will tell you how 't is produced. There exists in that region a kind of wild

animal like a gazelle. It has feet and tail like the gazelle's, and stag's hair of a very coarse kind, but no horns. It has four tusks, two below, and two above, about three inches long, and slender in form, one pair growing upward, and the other downward. It is a very pretty creature. The musk is found in this way. When the creature has been taken, they find between the flesh and the skin something like an impostume full of blood, which they cut out and remove with all the skin attached to it. And the blood inside this impostume is the musk that produces that powerful perfume. There is an immense number of these beasts in the country we are speaking of. The flesh is very good to eat. Messer Marco brought the dried head and feet of one of these animals to Venice with him.

The people are traders and artizans, and also grow abundance of corn. The province has an extent of twenty-six days' journey. Pheasants are found there twice as big as ours, indeed nearly as big as a peacock, and having tails of seven to ten palms in length; and besides them other pheasants in aspect like our own, and birds of many other kinds, and of beautiful variegated plumage. The people, who are Idolaters, are fat folks with little noses and black hair, and no beard, except a few hairs on the upper lip. The women too have very smooth and white skins, and in every respect are pretty creatures. The men marry many wives, which is not forbidden by their religion.

OF THE KINGDOM OF EGRIGAIA.

Starting again from Erguiul you ride eastward for eight days, and then come to a province called EGRIGAIA, containing numerous cities and villages, and belonging to Tangut. The capital city is called CALACHAN. The people are chiefly Idolaters, but there are fine churches belonging to the Nestorian Christians. They are all subjects of the Great Kaan. They make in this city great quantities of camlets of camel's wool, the finest in the world; and some of the camlets that they make are white, for they have white camels, and these are the best of all. Merchants purchase these stuffs here, and carry them over the world for sale.

We shall now proceed eastward from this place and enter the territory that was formerly Prester John's.

CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF TENDUC, AND THE DESCENDANTS OF PRESTER JOHN.

TENDUC is a province which lies towards the east, and contains numerous towns and villages; among which is the chief city, also called TENDUC. The king of the province is of the lineage of Prester John, George by name, and he holds the land under the Great Kaan; not that he holds any thing like the whole of what Prester John possessed. It is a custom, I may tell you, that these kings of the lineage of Prester John always obtain to wife either daughters of the Great Kaan or other princesses of his family.

In this province is found the stone from which Azure is made. It is obtained from a kind of vein in the earth, and is of very fine quality. There is also a great manufacture of fine camlets of different colors from camel's hair. The people get their living by their cattle and tillage, as well as by trade and handicraft.

The rule of the province is in the hands of the Christians as I have told you; but there are also plenty of Idolaters and worshippers of Mahommet. And there is also here a class of people called *Argons*, which is as much as to say in French *Guasmul*, or, in other words, sprung from two different races: to wit, of the race of the Idolaters of Tenduc and of that of the worshippers of Mahommet. They are handsomer men than the other natives of the country, and having more ability they come to have authority; and they are also capital merchants.

You must know that it was in this same capital city of Tenduc that Prester John had the seat of his government when he ruled over the Tartars, and his heirs still abide there; for, as I have told you, this King George is of his line; in fact, he is the sixth in descent from Prester John.

Here also is what *we* call the country of GOG and MAGOG; *they*, however, call it UNG and MUNGUL, after the names of two races of people that existed in that Province before the migration of the Tartars. *Ung* was the title of the people of the country, and *Mungul* a name sometimes applied to the Tartars.

And when you have ridden seven days eastward through this province you get near the provinces of Cathay. You find throughout those

seven days' journey plenty of towns and villages, the inhabitants of which are Mahommetans, but with a mixture also of Idolaters and Nestorian Christians. They get their living by trade and manufactures; weaving those fine cloths of gold which are called *Nasich* and *Naques*, besides silk stuffs of many other kinds. For just as we have cloths of wool in our country, manufactured in a great variety of kinds, so in those regions they have stuffs of silk and gold in like variety.

All this region is subject to the great Kaan. There is a city you come to called SINDACHU, where they carry on a great many crafts such as provide for the equipment of the Emperor's troops. In a mountain of the province there is a very good silver mine, from which much silver is got: the place is called YDIFU. The country is well stocked with game, both beast and bird.

"Punishment with the stick," said Fred, commenting on the Tartar mode of administering justice, "is still in fashion in China and other parts of the East. The judge decides how many blows are to be given and the sentence is immediately carried out. Sometimes the punishment may be reduced by payment of a fine, and if the offender is supposed to have money he is more likely to receive a heavy sentence than if penniless. The Chinese judges receive very small salaries, and are expected to get the principal part of their compensation through collections made from culprits."

But how about the odd numbers?" some one inquired.

"The Chinese are great believers in odd numbers," was the reply, "but whether the belief went from them to the Tartars or *vice versa* I am unable to say. If you count the stories of a Chinese pagoda you will find they are always odd, three, five, seven, nine, or eleven. On a Chinese jacket you generally see five buttons, and I have been told that if a man loses a button and cannot replace it at once he tears off another so as to avoid wearing an even number. But the Chinese are not singular in their respect for odd numbers, as it prevails, though to a lesser degree, in other parts of the world. If we make a

careful canvass among our own people we should probably be surprised at the proportion who believe in the adage which Frank has quoted from 'Rory O'More.'

"Compare the customs of the Tartars in branding their cattle, and see how exactly it describes the way of the herdsmen of our Western States and Territories. Word for word the story is the same, excepting that our annual 'round-up,' or assemblage of the herds for each owner to select his property, is not mentioned.

"The singular custom mentioned by Marco, of a wedding between persons who have died, prevails to-day in some parts of China, and in the way he describes."

A Chinese Lady.

"What is the reason for it?" one of the young ladies inquired.

"The Chinese would probably answer you that it was an old custom," said Dr. Allen, rising to assist Frank in clearing up the mystery. "Every thing in China that a native cannot clearly explain is disposed of in this way; the answer corresponds to our way of saying, 'because it 's the fashion.' A practical advantage is that it puts the two families on the footing of relatives, and enables the parents of the bride to erect a memorial tablet in her honor, which custom does not permit for a woman who remains single. It is not unusual for the marriage ceremony to be performed for a girl who has died during her betrothal; the husband receives a paper effigy of his bride, and after he has burned it he erects a tablet to her memory. The custom is not universal throughout China, and in some of the provinces is altogether unknown."

As the doctor sat down Fred continued his commentary. Referring to what had just been read he said : "Marco was describing countries he had not personally visited. Bargu probably referred to the country north of the desert of Gobi, as the name is preserved in the river Barguzin which flows into Lake Baikal in Siberia. There is a Tartar tribe called the Merkit living in the region to the southeast of Lake Baikal ; from there to the Arctic Ocean the country abounds in birds, especially in summer, when millions of ducks, geese, and swans fly northward for their moulting and breeding season. It is quite true that they are knocked over by means of sticks when they are destitute of feathers and unable to fly."

"Does n't Marco refer to reindeer when he speaks of the people riding on stags ?" one of the audience asked.

Yes," responded Fred, "but it is doubtful if he ever had any other than hearsay testimony concerning the practice. Yet he was quite right, as the Tunguse, Chuckchees, and Samoyedes, on the shores of the Arctic Ocean use their reindeer for riding purposes, while the Laplanders employ them only for driving. The reindeer is not an agreeable animal to ride, as the saddle is placed directly over his shoulders and the rider receives every jolt of the beast. The saddle is without stirrups, and it requires one to have the skill of an acrobat to maintain his place. The novice in riding a reindeer usually falls off from twenty to a hundred times in the first mile of his journey."

Sand-Grouse (*Syrrhaptes Pallasii*).

Another of the auditors asked Fred to describe the *barguerlac* mentioned by Polo.

"Dr. Allen is better informed than I am on that subject," replied the youth, "and I will ask him to explain."

"The *barguerlac*," said the doctor, "is supposed to be the

sand-grouse, which is identical with the Turkish *boghurtlak*. Ornithologists say it is the *Syrrhaptes Pallasii* of their dictionaries, and its home is in the regions around Lake Baikal, the Altai Mountains, and the Kirghiz Steppes. It will fly enormous distances, is in great numbers, and forms a delicious article of food. I have eaten this bird in Siberia and Mongolia and can pronounce in its favor, but Marco is wrong when he says it has a foot like a parrot. Its foot is without a hind claw and the toes are close together, so that the Chinese have given it the name of 'dragon-foot.' The bird has a waddling motion while walking, and it is this which probably caused him to make the comparison."

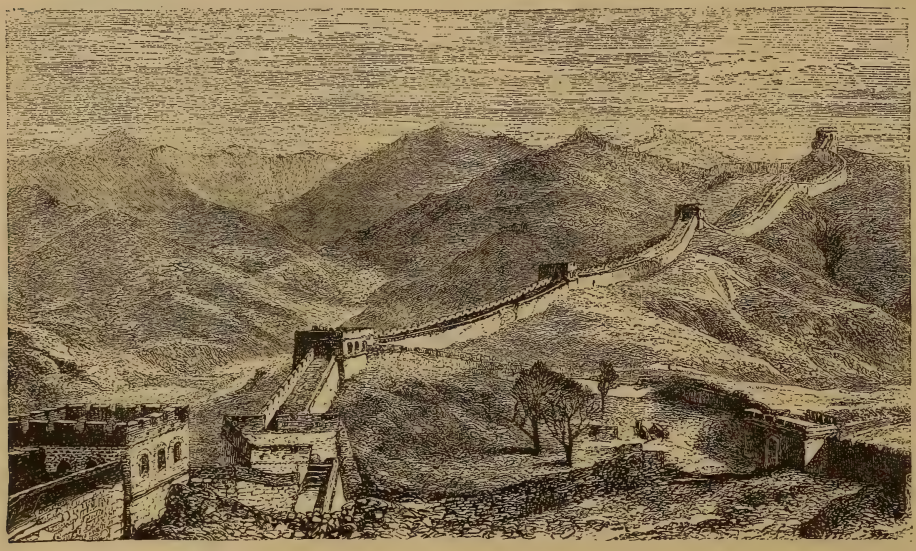
A Chinese Pheasant.

"Erguiul is not very clearly identified," said Fred, as the doctor concluded, "but Sinju is doubtless the modern Sining-Chau, a Chinese city near the frontier of Thibet. The cattle he speaks of are the yaks of Tartary, which you will find described in works on natural history. The yak has a close resemblance to the American buffalo or bison and is very fierce in its wild state. Marco exaggerates in representing the yak as almost as large as an elephant; the largest described by any modern traveller was eleven feet long, exclusive of the tail, and six feet high. Tame yaks are used as beasts of burden like oxen, and the best are kept for riding under the saddle. Marco's description of the musk deer is correct except as regards the tusks. He is also

right as to the pheasants, which are very large and far handsomer than the pheasants of Europe or America. Here is a picture of one."

Fred paused and exhibited a drawing of a Chinese pheasant which secured the admiration of all who saw it. A few minutes were devoted to the inspection of the picture and then he continued.

"Calachan in Egrigaia is probably the modern Alashan, a city of Chinese Tartary in about latitude 39° north. White camels are common in that part of the world, but the camlets of



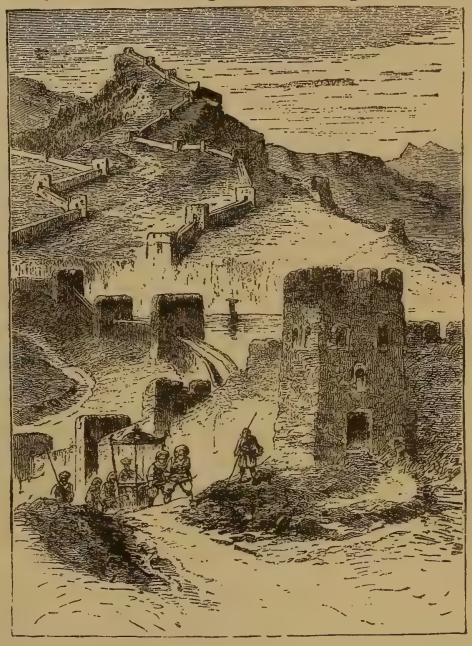
Great Wall of China—The Rampart of Gog and Magog.

commerce are made from wool and not from the hair of the camel.

"In the next paragraph," said Fred "we are in some doubt as to the location of Tenduc, but the city was probably the modern one of Kwei-hwa-ching and the plain of Tenduc was the region around it. It has been remarked that Marco nowhere mentions the great wall of China. Colonel Yule thinks it was in his mind when he spoke of the country of Gog and Magog, and that he should have said 'here we are beside the great wall

known as the rampart of Gog and Magog.' The towns and villages he mentions were probably to the north of the great wall, where there are now plenty of ruins to show that towns formerly existed. Sindachu is the modern Siwanhwa-fu, which lies about twenty-five miles south of the great wall on the road from Kiachta to Peking. There is a gate through the great wall at the city of Chang-kia-kow, which the Russians call Kalgan. Passing this gate the first city we reach is Siwanhwa-fu which has probably changed very little since Polo's travels.

"We will vary the proceedings by calling on the president of the Society to tell us about the great wall," said Fred, as he turned in the direction of that young gentleman. "He has studied the subject and can give us some interesting information."



View of the Great Wall Where the Lines Are Double.

Thus appealed to the president could not easily refuse. Rising to his feet, and clearing his throat for the effort, he spoke as follows:

"The great wall of China is called the *Wan-li-chang* or Myriad-mile-wall by the people of the country. It was built by the first emperor of the Tsin dynasty, about two hundred and twenty years before the Christian era, in order to keep out the Tartar tribes. It runs along the northern boundary of China, beginning at the Gulf of Pe-che-lee and extending westward about fourteen hundred miles. In many places there are double and triple lines extending for many miles. Adding these to the length of the single wall we have a total of two thousand miles,

or nearly one twelfth of the circumference of the globe. The wall is carried over hills and mountains and through valleys exactly as a farm wall is carried over the natural inequalities of the ground, and is justly considered one of the wonders of the world. Its general height is twenty feet including the parapet; it is twenty-five feet thick at the base, and fifteen at the top, and at distances of about three hundred feet there are towers or bastions thirty feet square at the top and about forty feet high."

He paused for a moment and some one asked what material was used in building the wall.

"The most of the way" he answered, "it is built of brick or stone arranged in double walls and filled in with earth, but there are many miles of solid stone or brick. It has suffered much in the two thousand years since it was constructed and is greatly ruined, but it can be traced through its whole length, and at many places is in a fine state of preservation. This is especially the case near Chan-kia-kow or Kalgan, where the gateway and much of the wall on each side are in good condition. This is the point where it is generally visited by travellers from Peking."

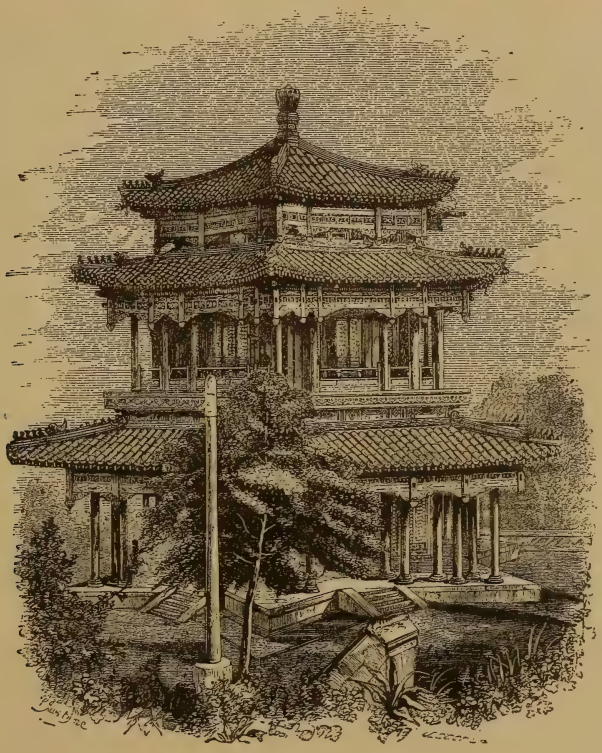
Amid the applause which followed Henry's first attempt at description, Frank rose and made ready to continue his part of the work.

CONCERNING THE KAAN'S PALACE OF CHAGAN NOR.

At the end of three days from the place last mentioned you find a city called CHAGAN NOR, which is as much as to say White Pool, at which there is a great Palace of the Grand Kaan's; and he likes much to reside there on account of the Lakes and Rivers in the neighborhood, which are the haunt of swans and of a great variety of other birds. The adjoining plains too abound with cranes, partridges, pheasants, and other game birds, so that the Emperor takes all the more delight in staying there, in order to go a-hawking with his gerfalcons and other falcons, a sport of which he is very fond.

There are five different kinds of cranes found in those tracts, as I shall tell you. First, there is one which is very big, and all over as black as a

crow; the second kind again is all white, and is the biggest of all; its wings are really beautiful, for they are adorned with round eyes like those of a peacock, but of a resplendent golden color, whilst the head is red and black on a white ground. The third kind is the same as ours. The fourth is a small kind, having at the ears beautiful long pendant feathers of red and black. The fifth kind is gray all over and of great size, with a handsome head, red and black.



Pavilion at Yuen-min-Yuen.

Near this city there is a valley in which the Emperor has had several little houses erected in which he keeps in mew a huge number of *cators*, which are what we call the great partridge. You would be astonished to see what a quantity there are, with men to take charge of them. So whenever the Kaan visits the place he is furnished with as many as he wants.

OF THE CITY OF CHANDU, AND THE KAAN'S PALACE THERE.

And when you have ridden three days from the city last mentioned, between northeast and north, you come to a city called CHANDU, which was built by the Kaan now reigning. There is at this place a very fine marble palace, the rooms of which are all gilt and painted with figures of men and beasts and birds, and with a variety of trees and flowers, all executed with such exquisite art that you regard them with delight and astonishment.

Round this Palace a wall is built, inclosing a compass of sixteen miles, and inside the Park there are fountains and rivers and brooks, and beautiful meadows, with all kinds of wild animals (excluding such as are of ferocious nature), which the Emperor has procured and placed there to supply food for his gerfalcons and hawks, which he keeps here in mew. Of these there are more than 200 gerfalcons alone, without reckoning the other hawks. The Kaan himself goes every week to see his birds sitting in mew, and sometimes he rides through the park with a leopard behind him on his horse's croup; and then if he sees any animal that takes his fancy, he slips his leopard at it, and the game when taken is made over to feed the hawks in mew. This he does for diversion.

Moreover, at a spot in the park where there is a charming wood, he has another palace built of cane, of which I must give you a description. It is gilt all over, and most elaborately finished inside. It is stayed on gilt and lackered columns, on each of which is a dragon all gilt, the tail of which is attached to the column whilst the head supports the architrave, and the claws likewise are stretched out right and left to support the architrave. The roof, like the rest, is formed of canes, covered with a varnish so strong and excellent that no amount of rain will rot them. These canes are a good three palms in girth, and from ten to fifteen paces in length. They are cut across at each knot, and then the pieces are split so as to form from each two hollow tiles, and with these the house is roofed; only every such tile of cane has to be nailed down to prevent the wind from lifting it. In short, the whole palace is built of these canes, which serve also for a great variety of other useful purposes. The construction of the palace is so devised that it can be taken down and put up again with great celerity; and it can all be taken to pieces and removed

whithersoever the Emperor may command. When erected, it is braced against mishaps from the wind by more than 200 cords of silk.

The Lord abides at this Park of his, dwelling sometimes in the Marble Palace and sometimes in the Cane Palace for three months of the year, to wit, June, July, and August, preferring this residence because it is by no means hot; in fact it is a very cool place. When the 28th day of August arrives he takes his departure, and the Cane Palace is taken to pieces. But I must tell you what happens when he goes away from this Palace every year on the 28th of August.

You must know that the Kaan keeps an immense stud of white horses and mares; in fact, more than 10,000 of them, and all pure white without a speck. The milk of these mares is drunk by himself and his family and by none else, except by those of one great tribe that have also the privilege of drinking it. This privilege was granted them by Chinghis Kaan, on account of a certain victory that they helped him to win long ago. The name of the tribe is HORIAD.

Catching Horses in Tartary. (From a Native Sketch.)

Now when these mares are passing across the country, and any one falls in with them, be he the greatest lord in the land, he must not presume to pass until the mares have gone by; he must either tarry where he is, or go a half-day's journey round if need so be, so as not to come nigh them; for they are to be treated with the greatest respect. Well, when the Lord sets out from the Park on the 28th of August, as I told you, the milk of all those mares is taken and sprinkled on the ground. And this is done on the injunction of the Idolaters and Idol-priests, who say that it is an excellent thing to sprinkle that milk on the ground every 28th of August, so that the Earth and the Air and the False Gods shall have their share of it, and the Spirits likewise that inhabit the Air and

the Earth. And thus those beings will protect and bless the Kaan and his children and his wives and his folk and his gear, and his cattle and his horses, his corn and all that is his. After this is done, the Emperor is off and away.

But I must now tell you a strange thing that hitherto I have forgotten to mention. During the three months of every year that the Lord resides at that place, if it should happen to be bad weather, there are certain crafty enchanters and astrologers in his train, who are such adepts in necromancy and the diabolic arts, that they are able to prevent any cloud or storm from passing over the spot on which the Emperor's Palace stands. The sorcerers who do this are called TEBET and KESIMUR, which are the names of two nations of Idolaters. Whatever they do in this way is by the help of the Devil, but they make those people believe that it is compassed by dint of their own sanctity and the help of God. They always go in a state of dirt and uncleanness, devoid of respect for themselves, or for those who see them, unwashed, unkempt, and sordidly attired.

There is another marvel performed by those BACSI, of whom I have been speaking as knowing so many enchantments. For when the Great Kaan is at his capital and in his great Palace, seated at his table, which stands on a platform some eight cubits above the ground, his cups are set before him on a great buffet in the middle of the hall pavement, at a distance of some ten paces from his table and filled with wine, or other good spiced liquor such as they use. Now when the Lord desires to drink, these enchanters by the power of their enchantments cause the cups to move from their places without being touched by anybody, and to present themselves to the Emperor! This every one present may witness, and there are ofttimes more than 10,000 persons thus present. 'T is a truth and no lie! and so will tell you the sages of our own country who understand necromancy, for they also can perform it.

And when the Idol Festivals come round, these *Bacsi* go to the Prince and say: "Sire, the Feast of such a god is come" (naming him). "My Lord, you know," the enchanter will say, "that this god, when he gets no offerings, always sends bad weather and spoils our seasons. So we pray you to give us such and such a number of black-faced sheep," naming

whatever number they please. "And we beg also, good my lord, that we may have such a quantity of incense, and such a quantity of lignaloes, and "—so much of this, so much of that, and so much of 't other, according to their fancy—"that we may perform a solemn service and a great sacrifice to our Idols, and that so they may be induced to protect us and all that is ours."

The *Bacsi* say these things to the Barons entrusted with the Stewardship, who stand round the Great Kaan, and these repeat them to the Kaan, and he then orders the Barons to give every thing that the Bacsi have asked for. And when they have got the articles they go and make a great feast in honor of their god, and hold great ceremonies of worship with grand illuminations and quantities of incense of a variety of odors, which they make up from different aromatic spices. And then they cook the meat, and set it before the idols, and sprinkle the broth hither and thither, saying that in this way the idols get their bellyful. Thus it is that they keep their festivals. You must know that each of the idols has a name of his own, and a feast-day, just as our Saints have their anniversaries.

A Thibetan Bacsi.

They have also immense Minsters and Abbeys, some of them as big as a small town, with more than two thousand monks (*i. e.*, after their fashion) in a single abbey. These monks dress more decently than the rest of the people, and have the head and beard shaven. There are some among these *Bacsi* who are allowed by their rule to take wives, and who have plenty of children.

Then there is another kind of devotees called SENSIN, who are men of extraordinary abstinence after their fashion, and lead a life of such hardship as I will describe. All their life long they eat nothing but bran, which they take mixt with hot water. That is their food: bran, and nothing but bran; and water for their drink. 'T is a lifelong fast! so that I may well say their life is one of extraordinary asceticism. They have great idols, and plenty of them; but they sometimes also worship fire. The other Idolaters who are not of this sect call these people heretics—*Patarins*, as we should say—because they do not worship their idols in their own fashion. Those of whom I am speaking would not take a wife on any consideration. They wear dresses of hempen stuff, black and blue, and sleep upon mats; in fact, their asceticism is something astonishing.

Now let us have done with this subject, and let me tell you of the great state and wonderful magnificence of the Great Lord of Lords; I mean that great Prince who is the Sovereign of the Tartars, CUBLAY by name, that most noble and puissant Lord.

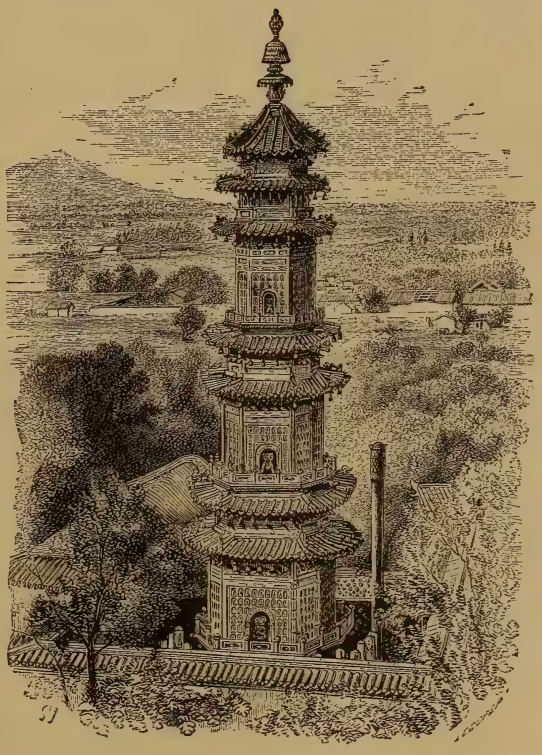
"This is the end of the first book of Marco Polo's narrative," said Fred as Frank paused and sat down. "Chagan Nor and Chandu are now in ruins, and the place where the emperor had his summer court is overgrown with weeds and inhabited only by wild animals and birds. The cranes, partridges, and pheasants are by no means extinct, though it is not easy to find them exactly as described by our traveller. In later times the Chinese emperors had their summer palace at Yuen-min-Yuen, and the description of Chandu is by no means inappropriate for Yuen-min-Yuen. The park was devastated and the buildings were destroyed by the French and English armies in 1860 at the time of the capture of Peking. According to all accounts it was a place of great beauty and an enormous amount of money had been expended upon it."

"Was it really true," said one of the younger auditors, "that the emperor had a palace built of canes?"

"The canes referred to were bamboos," Fred answerd, "and

it is not at all improbable that there was a whole palace built of this wood. The bamboo is one of the most useful plants in the world, and the people of China, Japan, and other countries of the East employ it for an endless variety of purposes. Hear what one traveller says of it :—

"An intelligent native of Arakan who accompanied me in the forests of the Burmese frontier, and who used to ask many questions about Europe, seemed able to apprehend almost every thing except the possibility of existence in a country without bamboos! When I speak of bamboo huts, I mean to say that posts and walls, wall-plates and rafters, floor and thatch, and the withes that bind them, are all of bamboo. In fact, it might almost be said that among the Indo-Chinese nations the staff of life is *a bamboo!* Scaffolding and ladders, landing-jetties, fishing apparatus, irrigation wheels and scoops, oars, masts, and yards [add in China, sails, cables, and caulking, asparagus, medicine, and works of fantastic art], spears and arrows, hats and helmets, bow, bowstring, and quiver, oil-cans, water-stoups, and cooking-pots, pipe-sticks [tinder and means of producing fire], conduits, clothes-boxes, pawn-boxes, dinner-trays, pickles, preserves, and melodious musical instruments, torches, footballs,



Pagoda and Gardens of the Emperor's Summer Palace, Yuen-min-Yuen.

cordage, bellows, mats, paper; these are but a few of the articles that are made from the bamboo; and in China it maintains order throughout the Empire, as it is with sticks of bamboo that offenders are beaten in Chinese courts of justice."

"So much for the bamboo," said Fred, "and we might say a great deal more on the subject if time permitted. The practice of sprinkling milk on the ground as an offering to the gods still prevails in parts of Central Asia and Tartary, and has been mentioned repeatedly by modern travellers. The *Bacsi* or sorcerers who claimed to produce rain or fair weather at will are nothing new, as we have already seen, and they still practise their arts in other parts of the world. More interesting than the feats with the weather were their tricks at conjuring, as shown in moving the cups to the emperor's lips. Marco probably saw the performance, as he vehemently asserts that it is the truth and no lie.

"The Tartar conjurors were, no doubt, very skilful, but their exhibitions have been equalled by the jugglers of India and China. Let me read an account of what was seen by one traveller since Marco's day :—

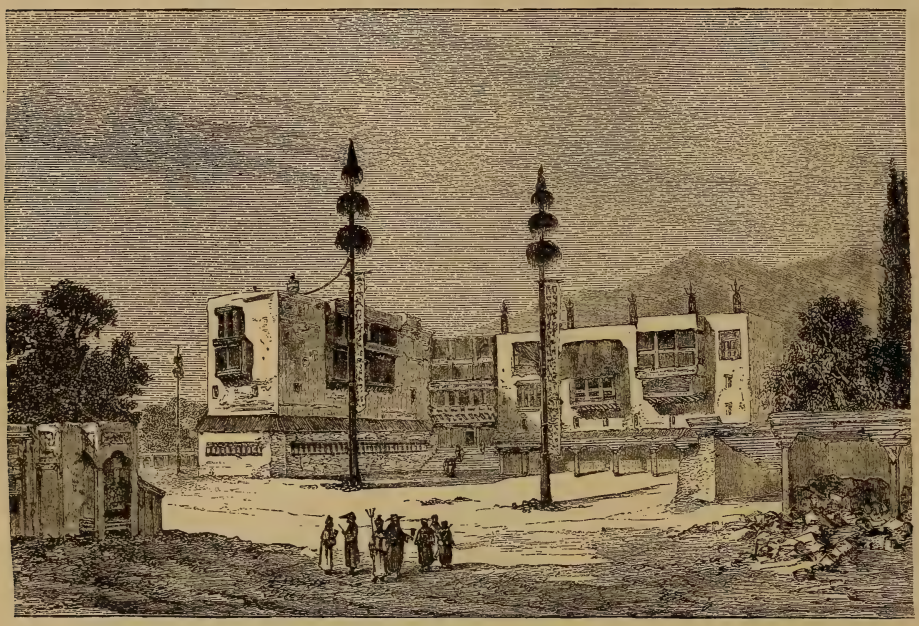
"That same night a juggler, who was one of the Kán's slaves, made his appearance, and the Amír said to him: 'Come and show us some of your marvels.' Upon this he took a wooden ball, with several holes in it through which long thongs were passed, and (laying hold of one of these) slung it into the air. It went so high that we lost sight of it altogether. (It was the hottest season of the year, and we were outside in the middle of the palace court.) There now remained only a little of the end of a thong in the conjuror's hand, and he desired one of the boys who assisted him to lay hold of it and mount. He did so, climbing by the thong, and we lost sight of him also! The conjuror then called to him three times, but getting no answer he snatched up a knife as if in a great rage, laid hold of the thong, and disappeared also! By and bye he threw down one of the boy's hands, then a foot, then the other hand, and then the other foot, then the trunk, and last of all the head! Then he came down him-

self, all puffing and panting, and with his clothes all bloody kissed the ground before the Amír, and said something to him in Chinese. The Amír gave some order in reply, and our friend then took the lad's limbs, laid them together in their places, and gave a kick, when, presto! there was the boy who got up and stood before us! All this astonished me beyond measure, and I had an attack of palpitation like that which overcame me once before in the presence of the Sultan of India, when he showed me something of the same kind. The Kazi Afkharuddin was next to me, and quoth he: '*Wallah!* 't is my opinion there has been neither going up nor coming down, neither marring nor mending; 't is all hocus pocus!'

Chinese Conjuring Extraordinary.

"Again we have in the Memoirs of the Emperor Jahángir a detail of the wonderful performances of seven jugglers from Bengal who exhibited before him. Two of their feats are thus described: 'They produced a man whom they divided limb from limb, actually severing his head from the body. They scattered these mutilated members along the ground, and in this state they lay for some time. They then extended a sheet or curtain over the spot, and one of the men putting himself under the sheet, in a few minutes came from below, followed by the individual supposed to have been cut into joints, in perfect health and condition, and one might have safely sworn that he had never received wound or injury whatever. * * * They produced a chain of fifty cubits in length, and in my presence threw one end of it toward the sky, *where it remained as if fastened to something in the air.* A dog was then brought forward, and

being placed at the lower end of the chain, immediately ran up, and reaching the other end, *immediately disappeared in the air*. In the same manner a hog, a panther, a lion, and a tiger were successively sent up the chain, and all equally disappeared at the upper end of the chain. At last they took down the chain and put it into a bag, no one ever discovering in what way the different animals were made to vanish into the air in the mysterious manner above described.' "



A Monastery of Lamas.

"A common trick in China," said the doctor, "and one which I have several times witnessed, is for one man to stand with outstretched arms against a wooden fence while another takes a position about two hundred feet away with a basket full of knives. The knives are thrown one after the other and stuck in the fence, all around the head, shoulders, arms, and hands of the man standing against it. The performance requires the most unerring accuracy on the part of the thrower of the knives, and an equal amount of confidence by the other man. The

jugglers of India will fill a common flower-pot with earth, plant the seed of a mango in it, and then sit down and fan it gently with a bit of a cloth. In a few moments the earth in the centre of the pot lifts a little, then the plant rises, it grows steadily, leaves, buds, and blossoms appear, and then the fruit, which ripens and is ready to be taken from the tree all in the space of half an hour. Finally, the fruit is cut off and handed around to the spectators, and the performer collects his money for the trick and departs. How it is done nobody has been able to find out."

Some one asked if the monks were as numerous now as in Polo's time, and if they really had as many as two thousand in one building.

"Certainly," was the reply. "One traveller (Turner) mentions a Thibetan convent with two thousand five hundred; Abbe Huc saw a convent with two thousand Lamas, and another with four thousand; and one of the convents at Lassa is said to have no less than seven thousand five hundred monks living there. They show a copper kettle of a capacity of a hundred buckets, and say this is used for making tea for the Lamas. Most of the Buddhist priests must remain single, but there is one sect which is permitted to marry."

"There is a custom among the——"

Here Fred looked at the clock and paused. "It is too late to deal further with Tartar customs," he continued, "and I move an adjournment. We shall have enough to occupy ourselves in hearing about the court of Kublai Khan."

The motion was carried and the meeting was declared adjourned.

CHAPTER X.

Kublai Khan and How He Went to Battle—Tartar Mode of Warfare—Elephants Used on the Battle-Field—A Doubtful Narrative—Court and Capital of the Emperor—Cambaluc, the Ancient Peking—Early Uses of the Umbrella—Its First Appearance in England.

THERE was a full attendance at the next meeting of the Society, every member having taken advantage of his right to bring a friend to listen to the description of Kublai Khan and his court. The president congratulated them on their interest and also on their promptness in assembling, and then called Frank to his feet. The young man was greeted as usual with a round of applause, for which he bowed his acknowledgments and then proceeded to the business of the evening.

BOOK II.

OF CUBLAY KAAN, THE GREAT KAAN NOW REIGNING, AND OF HIS GREAT PUISSANCE.

Now am I come to that part of our book in which I shall tell you of the great and wonderful magnificence of the Great Kaan now reigning, by name CUBLAY KAAN; *Kaan* being a title which signifyeth "The Great Lord of Lords," or Emperor. And of a surety he hath good right to such a title, for all men know for a certain truth that he is the most potent man, as regards forces and lands and treasure, that existeth in the world, or ever hath existed from the time of our First Father Adam until this day. All this I will make clear to you for truth, in this book of ours, so that every one shall be fain to acknowledge that he is the greatest Lord that is now in the world, or ever hath been.

CONCERNING THE REVOLT OF NAYAN, WHO WAS UNCLE TO THE GREAT KAAN CUBLAY.

Now this Cublay Kaan is of the right Imperial lineage, being descended from Chinghis Kaan, the first sovereign of all the Tartars. And he is the

sixth Lord in that succession, as I have already told you in this book. He came to the throne in the year 1256, and the Empire fell to him because of his ability and valor and great worth, as was right and reason.

Conventional Portrait of the Great Monarch.

His brothers, indeed, and other kinsmen disputed his claim, but his it remained, both because maintained by his great valor, and because it was in law and right his, as being directly sprung of the Imperial line.

Up to the year now running, to wit 1298, he hath reigned two and forty years, and his age is about eighty-five, so that he must have been about forty-three years of age when he first came to the throne. Before that time he had often been to the wars, and had shown himself a gallant soldier and an excellent captain. But after coming to the throne he never went to the wars in person save once. This befel in the year 1286, and I will tell you how he went.

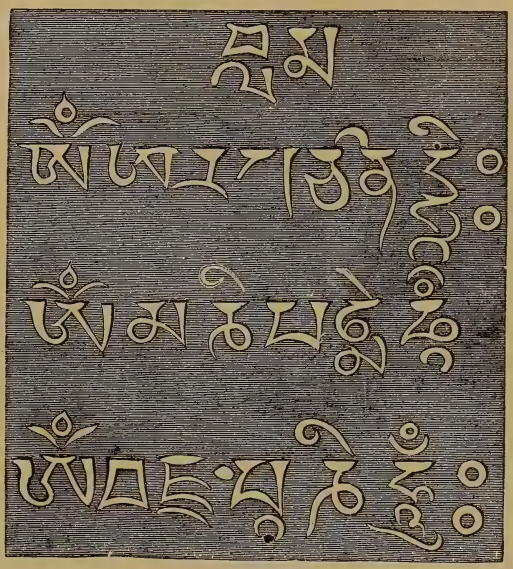
There was a great Tartar Chief, whose name was NAYAN, a young man of thirty, Lord over many lands and many provinces, and he was Uncle to the Emperor Cublay Kaan of whom we are speaking. And when he found himself in authority this Nayan waxed proud in the insolence of his youth and his great power; for indeed he could bring into the field 300,000 horsemen, though all the time he was liegeman to his nephew the Great Kaan Cublay as was right and reason. Seeing then what great power he had, he took it into his head that he would be the the Great Kaan's vassal no longer; nay, more, he would fain wrest his empire from him if he could. So this Nayan sent envoys to another Tartar Prince called CAIDU, also a great and potent Lord, who was a kinsman of his, and who was a nephew of the Great Kaan and his lawful liegeman also, though he was in rebellion and at bitter enmity with his sovereign Lord and Uncle. Now the message that Nayan sent was this: That he himself was making ready to march against the Great Kaan with all his forces (which were great), and he begged Caidu to do likewise from his side, so that by attacking Cublay on two sides at once with such great forces they would be able to wrest his dominion from him.

And when Caidu heard the message of Nayan, he was right glad thereat, and thought the time was come at last to gain his object. So he sent back answer that he would do as requested; and got ready his host, which mustered a good hundred thousand horsemen.

HOW THE GREAT KAAN MARCHED AGAINST NAYAN.

When the Great Kaan heard what was afoot, he made his preparations in right good heart, like one who feared not the issue of an attempt so contrary to justice. Confident in his own conduct and prowess, he was in no degree disturbed, but vowed that he would never

wear crown again if he brought not those two traitorous and disloyal Tartar chiefs to an ill end. So swiftly and secretly were his preparations made that no one knew of them but his Privy Council, and all were completed within ten or twelve days. In that time he had assembled good 360,000 horsemen and 100,000 footmen,—but a small force indeed for him, and consisting only of those that were in the vicinity. For the rest of his vast and innumerable forces were too far off to answer so hasty a summons, being engaged under orders from him on distant expeditions to conquer divers countries and provinces. If he had waited to summon all his troops, the multitude assembled would have been beyond all belief, a multitude such as never was heard of or told of, past all counting! In fact, those 360,000 horsemen that he got together consisted merely of the falconers and whippers-in that were about the court!



Mongol Inscription on Stone, of ancient date.

And when he had got ready this handful (as it were) of his troops, he ordered his astrologers to declare whether he should gain the battle and get the better of his enemies. After they had made their observations, they told him to go on boldly, for he would conquer and gain a glorious victory: whereat he greatly rejoiced.

So he marched with his army, and after advancing for twenty days they arrived at a great plain where Nayan lay with all his host, amounting to some 400,000 horse. Now the Great Kaan's forces arrived so fast and so suddenly that the others knew nothing of the matter. For the Kaan had caused such strict watch to be made in every direction for scouts that every one that appeared was instantly captured. Thus Nayan had

no warning of his coming and was completely taken by surprise; insomuch that when the Great Kaan's army came up, he was asleep. So thus you see why it was that the Emperor equipped his force with such speed and secresy.

OF THE BATTLE THAT THE GREAT KAAN FOUGHT WITH NAYAN.

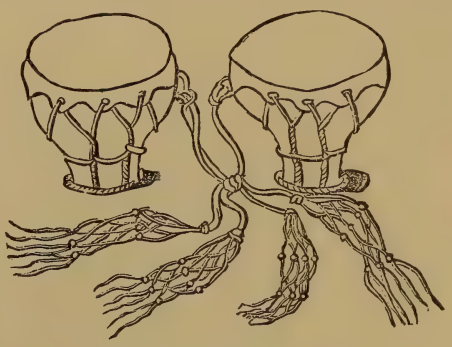
What shall I say about it? When day had well broken, there was the Kaan with all his host upon a hill overlooking the plain where Nayan lay in his tent, in all security, without the slightest thought of any one coming thither to do him hurt. In fact, this confidence of his was such that he kept no vedettes whether in front or in rear; for he knew nothing of the coming of the Great Kaan, owing to all the approaches having been completely occupied as I told you. Moreover the place was in a remote wilderness, more than thirty marches from the Court, though the Kaan had made the distance in twenty, so eager was he to come to battle with Nayan.

And what shall I tell you next? The Kaan was there on the hill, mounted on a great wooden bartizan, which was borne by four well-trained elephants, and over him was hoisted his standard, so high aloft that it could be seen from all sides. His troops were ordered in battles of 30,000 men apiece; and a great part of the horsemen had each a foot-soldier armed with a lance set on the crupper behind him (for it was thus that the footmen were disposed of); and the whole plain seemed to be covered with his forces. So it was thus that the Great Kaan's army was arrayed for battle.

When Nayan and his people saw what happened, they were sorely confounded, and rushed in haste to arms. Nevertheless they made them ready in good style and formed their troops in an orderly manner. And when all were in battle array on both sides as I have told you, and nothing remained but to fall to blows, then might you have heard a sound arise of many instruments of various music, and of the voices of the whole of the two hosts loudly singing. For this is a custom of the Tartars, that before they join battle they all unite in singing and playing on a certain two-stringed instrument of theirs, a thing right pleasant to hear. And so they continue in their array of battle, singing and playing

in this pleasing manner, until the great Naccara of the Prince is heard to sound. As soon as that begins to sound the fight also begins on both sides; and in no case before the Prince's Naccara sounds dare any commence fighting.

So then, as they were thus singing and playing, though ordered and ready for battle, the great Naccara of the Great Kaan began to sound. And that of Nayan also began to sound. And thenceforward the din of battle began to be heard loudly from this side and from that. And they rushed to work so doughtily with their bows and their maces, with their lances and swords, and with the arblasts of the footmen, that it was a wondrous sight to see. Now might you behold such flights of arrows from this side and from that, that the whole heaven was canopied with them and they fell like rain. Now might you see on this side and on that full many a cavalier and man-at-arms fall slain, insomuch that the whole field seemed covered with them. For fierce and furious was the battle, and quarter there was none given.



Nacaras from an Indian Original.

But why should I make a long story of it? You must know that it was the most parlous and fierce and fearful battle that ever has been fought in our day. Nor have there ever been such forces in the field in actual fight, especially of horsemen, as were then engaged—for, taking both sides, there were not fewer than 760,000 horsemen, a mighty force! and that without reckoning the footmen, who were also very numerous. The battle endured with various fortune on this side and on that from morning till noon. But at the last, by God's pleasure and the right that was on his side, the Great Kaan had the victory, and Nayan lost the battle and was utterly routed. For the army of the Great Kaan performed such feats of arms that Nayan and his host could stand against them no longer, so they turned and fled. But this availed nothing for Nayan; for he and all the barons with him were taken prisoners, and had to surrender to the Kaan with all their arms.

Now you must know that Nayan was a baptized Christian, and bore the cross on his banner; but this nought availed him, seeing how grievously he had done amiss in rebelling against his Lord. For he was the Great Kaan's liegeman, and was bound to hold his lands of him like all his ancestors before him.

HOW THE GREAT KAAN CAUSED NAYAN TO BE PUT TO DEATH.

And when the Great Kaan learned that Nayan was taken right glad was he, and commanded that he should be put to death straightway and in secret, lest endeavors should be made to obtain pity and pardon for him, because he was of the Kaan's own flesh and blood. And this was the way in which he was put to death: he was wrapt in a carpet, and tossed to and fro so mercilessly that he died. And the Kaan caused him to be put to death in this way because he would not have the blood of his Line Imperial spilt upon the ground or exposed in the eye of Heaven and before the Sun.

And when the Great Kaan had gained this battle, as you have heard, all the Barons and people of Nayan's provinces renewed their fealty to the Kaan. Now these provinces that had been under the Lordship of Nayan were four in number, to wit: the first called CHORCHA; the second CAULY; the third BARSCOL; the fourth SIKINTINJU. Of all these four great provinces had Nayan been Lord; it was a very great dominion.

And after the Great Kaan had conquered Nayan, as you have heard, it came to pass that the different kinds of people who were present, Saracens and Idolaters and Jews, and many others that believed not in God, did gibe those that were Christians because of the cross that Nayan had borne on his standard, and that so grievously that there was no bearing it. Thus they would say to the Christians: "See now what precious help this Cross of yours hath rendered Nayan, who was a Christian and a worshipper thereof." And such a din arose about the matter that it reached the Great Kaan's own ears. When it did so, he sharply rebuked those who cast these gibes at the Christians; and he also bade the Christians be of good heart, "for if the Cross had rendered no help to Nayan, in that It had done right well; nor could that which was good, as It was, have done otherwise; for Nayan was a disloyal and traitorous

Rebel against his Lord, and well deserved that which had befallen him. Wherefore the Cross of your God did well in that It gave him no help against the right." And this he said so loud that everybody heard him. The Christians then replied to the Great Kaan : " Great King, you say the truth indeed, for our Cross can render no one help in wrong-doing ; and therefore it was that It aided not Nayan, who was guilty of crime and disloyalty, for It would take no part in his evil deeds."

And so thenceforward no more was heard of the floutings of the unbelievers against the Christians; for they heard very well what the Sovereign said to the latter about the Cross on Nayan's banner, and its giving him no help.

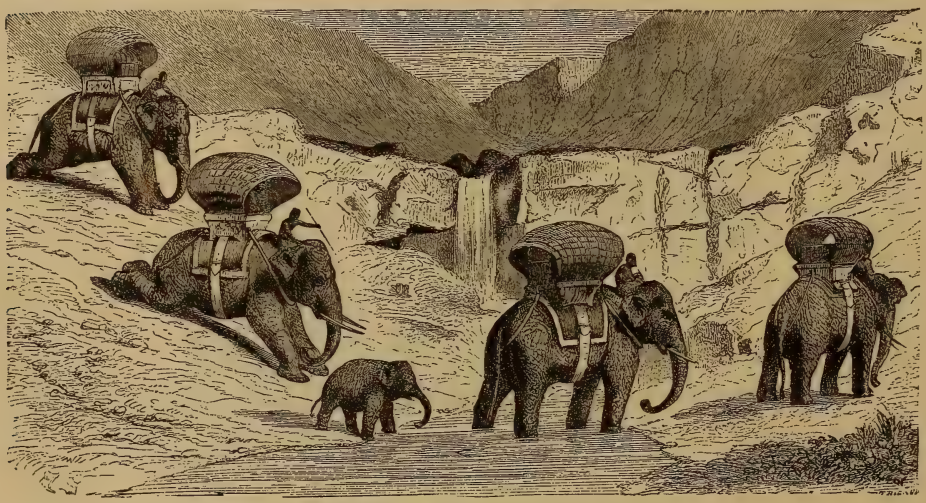
A Tartar Prince at Home.

" This account of a battle must be taken with a great many grains of salt," Fred remarked, as he rose to comment on what Frank had read. " It is evident Marco had imbibed the spirit of exaggeration which prevails in the East, and multiplied very greatly the armies of the Khan and his so-called uncle. According to the Chinese histories, Nayan was not an uncle of Kublai, but a second or third cousin ; it is not correct, as Marco asserts, that Kublai never went to war in person except on this one occasion. Soon after he ascended the throne he led an army against his

brother and rival, Arikbuga, and defeated him. Again in his old age he took the field against a rebel army in the north of his dominions. In the latter case he fought no battle, as the rebels scattered on his approach."

"What a splendid correspondent of a newspaper Mr. Polo would be if he were living to-day," remarked the doctor in an undertone, as Fred paused a moment to collect his breath.

The elders of the audience had a quiet laugh to themselves over the doctor's commentary. The younger ones did not seem to appreciate its force, but concluded they would be able to at a later period of life.



A Caravan of Elephants Crossing a Mountain Stream.

One of the young gentlemen wished to know the character of the bartizan which was said to have been carried on the backs of four trained elephants.

"Bartizan is an old English word meaning a timber parapet or watch-tower," Fred explained. "It is more likely, however, that the Khan rode a single elephant on which there was a *howdah*, or saddle, in the shape of a tower. Four elephants would need to be remarkably well trained to make it safe to ride in a saddle borne by all of them together, especially in battle, and the great Kublai

was too cautious to trust himself and the probable fate of the battle to a contrivance of this kind. Elephants were just then coming into use in China, and their presence on the field would go a great way towards alarming the enemy."

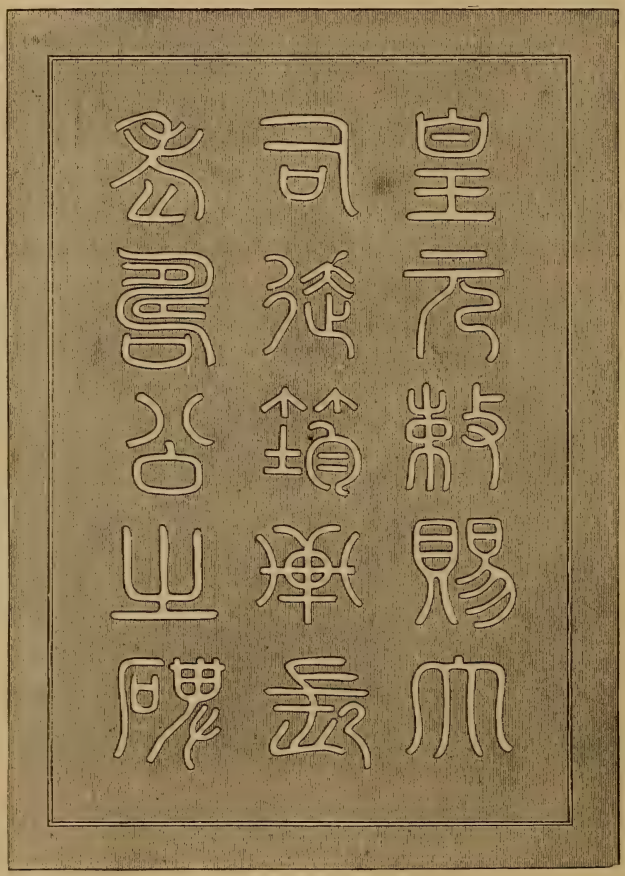
"Allowing for exaggerations of numbers," said Dr. Allen, "the account of the battle is doubtless a very good one. It explains the Tartar and Chinese mode of making war, as they both consider a great noise to be part of the programme. They generally wait until the commander has given the signal for fighting before they begin their hubbub. Marco has reversed the usual order of things, and evidently forgets that if the soldiers make such a din as he describes, they would be unable to hear the signal of the great nacara at all.

Nacaras from a Chinese Original.

"The *nacara* is a sort of kettle-drum which is still in use in the East, and not altogether unknown in Europe. Some nacaras are of great size, but usually they are about four feet in diameter. It is quite likely that Kublai had a drum of unusual dimensions, and for greater effect had it mounted on an elephant. And now we will listen to Fred, who has something to tell you about one of the incidents that followed the battle."

"It 's a disagreeable subject," said the youth, "and we 'll get over it as soon as possible. I refer to the manner in which the Khan put Nayan to death. The aversion to shedding royal blood still prevails in most countries of Asia. Ordinary persons may be beheaded by the executioner, but those of royal families are strangled or smothered. Perhaps you may have read not long ago how the King of Burmah put to death his brothers and sisters for fear some of them might attempt to succeed him on the throne. In spite of his barbarity he was governed by the same feelings that animated Kublai when he disposed of his rebellious relative."

Fred sat down and Frank resumed the narrative. But before doing so he explained that the book contained descriptions of



HEADING
in the Old Chinese Seal Character, of an
INSCRIPTION on a Memorial raised by KUBLAI-KAAN
to a Buddhist Ecclesiastic in the vicinity of his SUMMER-
PALACE at SHANGTU in Mongolia.
Reduced from a facsimile obtained on the spot by Dr. S.W. BUSHELL.
1872.

other battles, but they were all so much like the one already given that he should exercise the editor's privilege, and con-

dense them wherever he thought advisable. His auditors expressed their approval of his intentions, and with this assurance he went on with the story.

HOW THE GREAT KAAN WENT BACK TO THE CITY OF CAMBALUC.

And after the Great Kaan had defeated Nayan in the way you have heard, he went back to his capital city of Cambaluc and abode there, taking his ease and making festivity. And the other Tartar Lord called Caydu was greatly troubled when he heard of the defeat and death of Nayan, and held himself in readiness for war; but he stood greatly in fear of being handled as Nayan had been.

I told you that the great Kaan never went on a campaign but once, and it was on this occasion; in all other cases of need he sent his sons or his barons into the field. But this time he would have none go in command but himself, for he regarded the presumptuous rebellion of Nayan as far too serious and perilous an affair to be otherwise dealt with.

HOW THE KAAN REWARDED THE VALOR OF HIS CAPTAINS.

So we will have done with this matter of Nayan, and go on with our account of the great state of the Great Kaan.

We have already told you of his lineage and of his age; but now I must tell you what he did after his return, in regard to those barons who had behaved well in the battle. Him who was before captain of 100 he made captain of 1000; and him who was captain of 1000 men he made to be captain of 10,000, advancing every man according to his deserts and to his previous rank. Besides that, he also made them presents of fine silver plate and other rich appointments; gave them Tablets of Authority of a higher degree than they held before; and bestowed upon them fine jewels of gold and silver, and pearls and precious stones; insomuch that the amount that fell to each of them was something astonishing. And yet 't was not so much as they had deserved; for never were men seen who did such feats of arms for the love and honor of their Lord, as these had done on that day of the battle.

Now those Tablets of Authority, of which I have spoken, are ordered in this way. The officer who is a captain of 100 hath a tablet of silver;

the captain of 1,000 hath a tablet of gold or silver-gilt; the commander of 10,000 hath a tablet of gold, with a lion's head on it. And I will tell you the weight of the different tablets, and what they denote. The tablets of the captains of 100 and 1000 weigh each of them 120 *saggi;* and the tablet with the lion's head engraven on it, which is that of the commander of 10,000, weighs 220 *saggi.* And on each of the tablets is inscribed a device, which runs: "*By the strength of the great God, and of the great grace which He hath accorded to our Emperor, may the name of the Kaan be blessed; and let all such as will not obey him be slain and be destroyed.*" And I tell you besides that all who hold these tablets likewise receive warrants in writing, declaring all their powers and privileges.

I should mention too that an officer who holds the chief command of 100,000 men, or who is general-in-chief of a great host, is entitled to a tablet that weighs 300 *saggi.* It has an inscription thereon to the same purport that I have told you already, and below the inscription there is the figure of a lion, and below the lion the sun and moon. They have warrants also of their high rank, command, and power. Every one, moreover, who holds a tablet of this exalted degree is entitled, whenever he goes abroad, to have a little golden canopy, such as is called an umbrella, carried on a spear over his head in token of his high command. And whenever he sits, he sits in a silver chair.

To certain very great lords also there is given a tablet with gerfalcons on it; this is only to the very greatest of the Kaan's barons, and it confers on them his own full power and authority; so that if one of those chiefs wishes to send a messenger any whither, he can seize the horses of any man, be he even a king, and any other chattels at his pleasure.

CONCERNING THE PERSON OF THE GREAT KAAN.

The personal appearance of the Great Kaan, Lord of Lords, whose name is Cublay, is such as I shall now tell you. He is of a good stature, neither tall nor short, but of a middle height. He has a becoming amount of flesh, and is very shapely in all his limbs. His complexion is white and red, the eyes black and fine, the nose well formed and well set on. He has four wives, whom he retains permanently as his legitimate consorts; and the eldest of his sons by those four wives ought by rights

to be emperor;—I mean when his father dies. Those four ladies are called empresses, but each is distinguished also by her proper name. And each of them has a special court of her own, very grand and ample; no one of them having fewer than 300 fair and charming damsels. They have also many pages and other attendants of both sexes; so that each of these ladies has not less than 1000 persons attached to her court.

Portrait of Kublai Khan. (From a Chinese Drawing.)

CONCERNING THE GREAT KAAN'S SONS.

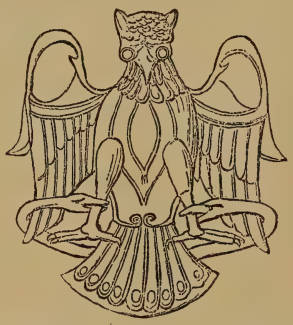
The Emperor hath, by those four wives of his, twenty-two male children; the eldest of whom was called CHINKIN for the love of the good Chinghis Kaan, the first Lord of the Tartars. And this Chinkin, as the eldest son of the Kaan, was to have reigned after his father's death; but, as it came to pass, he died. He left a son behind him, however, whose name is TEMUR, and he is to be the great Kaan and Emperor after the death of his Grandfather, as is but right; he being the child of the Great Kaan's eldest son. And this Temur is an able and brave man, as he hath already proven on many occasions.

There are seven of the great Kaan's children who are kings of vast realms or provinces, and govern them well; being all able and gallant men, as might be expected. For the great Kaan is the wisest and most accomplished man, the greatest Captain, the best to govern men and rule an Empire, as well as the most valiant, that ever has existed among all the Tribes of Tartars.

CONCERNING THE PALACE OF THE GREAT KAAN.

You must know that for three months of the year, to wit, December, January, and February, the Great Kaan resides in the capital city of Cathay, which is called CAMBALUC, and which is at the northeastern extremity of the country. In that city stands his great Palace, and now I will tell you what it is like.

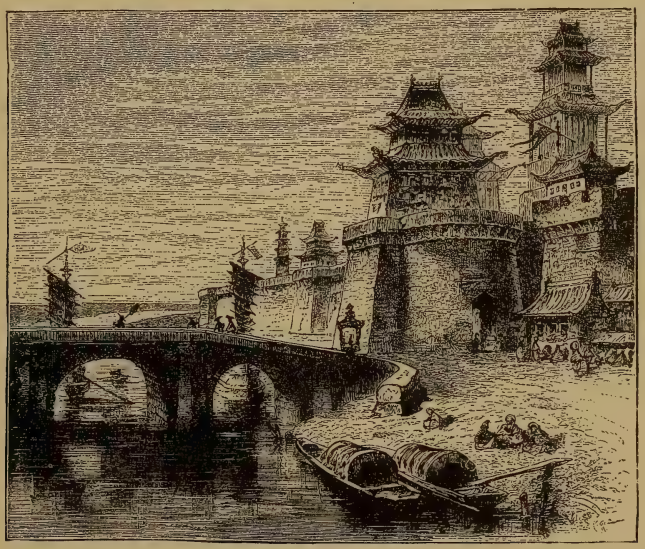
It is enclosed all round by a great wall forming a square, each side of which is a mile in length; that is to say, the whole compass thereof is four miles. It is also very thick and a good ten paces in height, white-washed and loop-holed all round. At each angle of the wall there is a very fine and rich palace in which the war-harness of the Emperor is kept, such as bows and quivers, saddles and bridles, and bowstrings, and every thing needful for an army. Also midway between every two of these Corner Palaces there is another of the like, so that taking the whole compass of the enclosure you find eight vast Palaces stored with the Great King's harness of war. And you must understand that each Palace is assigned to only one kind of article; thus one is stored with bows, a second with saddles, a third with bridles, and so on in succession right round.



Sculptured Gerfalcon from the Gate of Iconium.

The great wall has five gates on its southern face, the middle one being the great gate which is never opened on any occasion except when the Great Kaan himself goes forth or enters. Close on either side of this great gate is a smaller one by which all other people pass; and then towards each angle is another great gate, also open to people in general; so that on that side there are five gates in all.

Inside of this wall there is a second, enclosing a space that is somewhat greater in length than in breadth. This enclosure also has eight palaces corresponding to those of the outer wall, and stored like them with the King's harness of war. This wall also hath five gates on the southern face, corresponding to those in the outer wall, and hath one gate on each of the other faces as the outer wall hath also. In the middle of the second enclosure is the King's Great Palace, and I will tell you what it is like.



West Gate of Peking

You must know that it is the greatest Palace that ever was. Toward the north it is in contact with the outer wall, whilst toward the south there is a vacant space which the Barons and the soldiers are constantly traversing. The Palace itself hath no upper story, but is all on the ground floor, only the basement is raised some ten palms above the surrounding soil, and this elevation is retained by a wall of marble raised to the level of the pavement, two paces in width, and projecting beyond the base of the Palace so as to form a kind of terrace-walk, by which people can pass round the building, and which is exposed to view, whilst on the outer edge of the wall there is a very fine pillared balustrade;

and up to this the people are allowed to come. The roof is very lofty, and the walls of the Palace are all covered with gold and silver. They are also adorned with representations of dragons, sculptured and gilt, beasts and birds, knights and idols, and sundry other subjects. And on the ceiling too you see nothing but gold and silver and painting. On each of the four sides there is a great marble staircase leading to the top of the marble wall, and forming the approach to the Palace.

The Hall of the Palace is so large that it could easily dine 6,000 people; and it is quite a marvel to see how many rooms there are besides. The building is altogether so vast, so rich, and so beautiful, that no man on earth could design any thing superior to it. The outside of the roof also is all colored with vermilion and yellow and green and blue and other hues, which are fixed with a varnish so fine and exquisite that they shine like crystal, and lend a resplendent lustre to the Palace as seen for a great way round. This roof is made too with such strength and solidity that it is fit to last for ever.

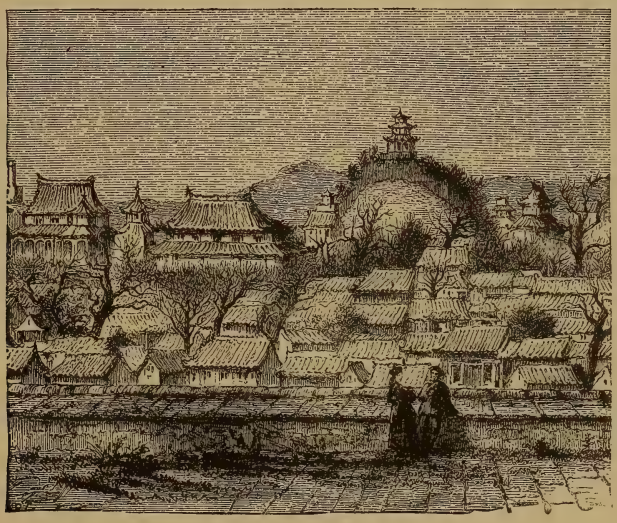
On the interior side of the Palace are large buildings with halls and chambers, where the Emperor's private property is placed, such as his treasures of gold, silver, gems, pearls, and gold plate, and in which reside the ladies of the court.

Between the two walls of the enclosure which I have described, there are fine parks and beautiful trees bearing a variety of fruits. There are beasts also of sundry kinds, such as white stags and fallow deer, gazelles and roebucks, and fine squirrels of various sorts, with numbers also of the animal that gives the musk, and all manner of other beautiful creatures, insomuch that the whole place is full of them, and no spot remains void except where there is traffic of people going and coming. The parks are covered with abundant grass; and the roads through them being all paved and raised two cubits above the surface, they never become muddy, nor does the rain lodge on them, but flows off into the meadows, quickening the soil and producing that abundance of herbage.

From that corner of the enclosure which is towards the north-west there extends a fine lake, containing fish of different kinds which the Emperor hath caused to be put in there, so that whenever he desires any he can have them at his pleasure. A river enters this lake and issues

from it, but there is a grating of iron or brass put up so that the fish cannot escape in that way.

Moreover on the north side of the palace, about a bow-shot off, there is a hill which has been made by art from the earth dug out of the lake; it is a good hundred paces in height and a mile in compass. This hill is entirely covered with trees that never lose their leaves, but remain ever green. And I assure you that wherever a beautiful tree may exist, and the Emperor gets news of it, he sends for it and has it transported bodily with all its roots and the earth attached to them, and planted on that hill of his. No matter how big the tree may be, he gets it carried by his



Distant View of the Green Mount as It Now Is.

elephants; and in this way he has got together the most beautiful collection of trees in all the world. And he has also caused the whole hill to be covered with the ore of azure, which is very green. And thus not only are the trees all green, but the hill itself is all green likewise; and there is nothing to be seen on it that is not green; and hence it is called the GREEN MOUNT; and in good sooth 't is named well.

On the top of the hill again there is a fine big palace which is all green inside and out; and thus the hill, and the trees, and the palace form together a charming spectacle; and it is marvellous to see their uniformity

of color! Everybody who sees them is delighted. And the Great Kaan has caused this beautiful prospect to be formed for the comfort and solace and delectation of his heart.

You must know that beside the Palace that we have been describing, *i. e.*, the Great Palace, the Emperor has caused another to be built just like his own in every respect, and this he hath done for his son when he shall reign and be Emperor after him. Hence it is made just in the same fashion and of the same size, so that every thing can be carried on in the same manner after his own death. It stands on the other side of the lake from the Great Kaan's Palace, and there is a bridge crossing the water from one to the other. The Prince in question holds now a Seal of Empire, but not with such complete authority as the Great Kaan, who remains supreme as long as he lives.

Vase from the Khan's Palace.

Now I am going to tell you of the Chief City of Cathay, in which these Palaces stand; and why it was built, and how.

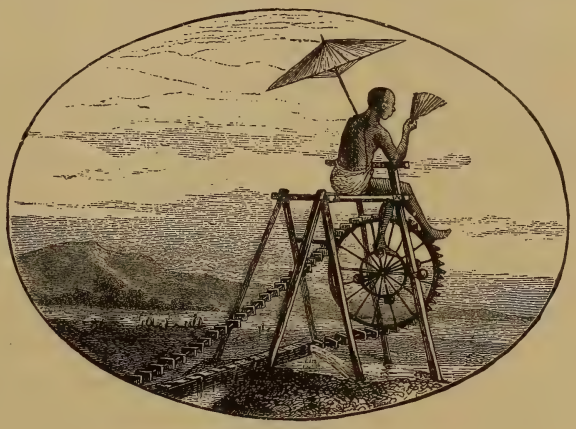
"We have already spoken of the tablets of authority distributed by the emperor," said Fred as he rose at the end of Frank's reading. "Promotions after a battle are as common in our time as in the day of which Polo has written, but it is not always that they are made so universal as in the present instance. Military men will doubtless be puzzled to know what Kublai did with so many colonels and generals as he seems to have created after his return to his capital. They were probably as abundant in Cambaluc as the same class of officers were in Washington and New York during the last two years of the Civil War in America.

"You may be curious to know the value of the tablets which Marco describes. The *saggio* was a Venetian weight, equal to one sixth of an ounce; in another place he makes it represent a *miskal*, which was about seventy-four grains troy. Conse-

quently the smallest of the tablets he mentions would have weighed about 18½ ounces."

"The tablets were useful in more ways than one," remarked Dr. Allen in an undertone. "It is quite likely that many of the officers employed them as collaterals on loans when they could not communicate with their bankers, just as modern officers have been known to leave their side-arms in pledge for the payment of obligations."

"History does not tell us about that," replied Fred, "and we are therefore in doubt as to the ultimate fate of the metallic commissions issued by the Great Khan. I have already described one of the Tartar tablets found in Siberia, and here is a picture of another. In one of the manuscripts of Polo's narrative they are said to have weighed from twenty-four to thirty-two ounces, which must have made them rather inconvenient for wearing at all times.



Practical use of the Umbrella.

"The ornaments of the lion and the sun are of very ancient origin, and have descended to our time. They appear on the arms of the Shah of Persia, and also upon those of some of the princes of India. The gerfalcon, too, is of ancient as well as modern significance, and we find many things in Polo's story to remind us that there is nothing new under the sun. As for the umbrella, it is still a mark of authority in many parts of Asia and Africa. A king of Dahomey or Ashantee without his umbrella would be sadly deficient in royal power."

"I thought I had read somewhere that the umbrella was invented by an Englishman in the last century," said the youngest

member of the Society. "I was reading about it only a few days ago."

"The use of the umbrella against the sun is a very ancient custom," said Dr. Allen in reply to the remark, "but you are right about its introduction into England. One Jonas Hanway, who had been in Persia, first appeared on the streets of London with an umbrella about the year 1750; he was jeered at by the populace, and for a long time the use of an umbrella as a protection against the rain was considered a mark of great weakness and effeminacy. The general use of umbrellas, as we now employ them, dates only from the beginning of this century. And in some Asiatic countries they retain only their ancient use, as a protection against the sun."

"About the personal appearance of Kublai Khan," continued Fred, "I have nothing to say, for the very plain reason that we have no knowledge beyond that given by Polo. We are more interested in his palace just now, as we have more details concerning the city of Cambaluc than of its owner. Cambaluc stands for Peking, the present capital of China, and clearly known to have been the capital in Kublai Khan's time. There has been a city there for more than two thousand years, and it has been the capital under several dynasties. It was captured by Genghis Khan in 1215, when it was known as Yenking. Kublai adopted it as his chief residence in 1264, and founded the new city of Tatu, or 'Great Court,' a little distance from the old city of Yenking.

"Perhaps the best way for us to compare the old with the new is for all to join me in the request that Dr. Allen will open the session of the next meeting with a short description of Peking as he saw it in his last journey round the world."

"I second the motion," said half a dozen in the same breath.

The president rose and put the motion to vote. It was carried unanimously. Dr. Allen announced that he would comply with the request, and then, on another motion, duly seconded, an adjournment was voted.

CHAPTER XI.

Dr. Allen's Story—Description of Peking as It Appears To-day—Comparisons of the Old and New Cities—Kublai Khan's Court and Ceremonies—The City of Cambaluc and Its Modern Successor—New Year's Day or the "White Feast"—The Khan's Liberality and How It Was Returned—An Imperial Banquet.

AGREEABLY to his promise, Dr. Allen opened the next session of the Society with a description of Peking.

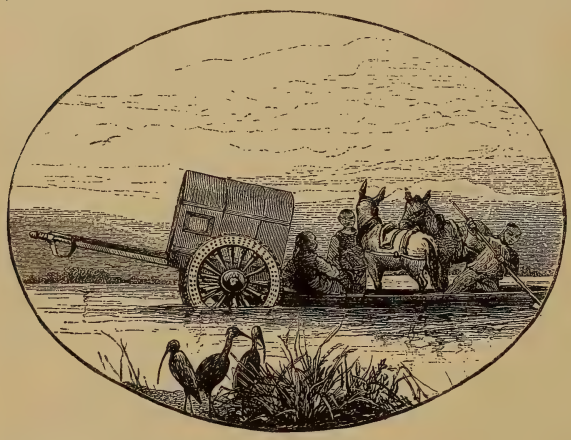
"There is great diversity of opinion," said he, "as to the population of Peking. Some estimates exceed two millions, while others put it as low as eight hundred thousand; between these extremes there is a wide range, and as the Chinese do not inform us as to the figures, we are left to make them for ourselves. Certainly the city covers a large area, and if it is as crowded as the other cities of China it has a great deal more than a million inhabitants. The Chinese do not take any census, and there are many parts of Peking where foreigners are forbidden to go, but, from all the information at hand, I think the population is not far from a million and a quarter.

"Peking stands on a plain, and is not visible until you get quite close to it. It is surrounded by walls, and consists of two parts which are separated by a wall; the southern part is called the Chinese city, and the northern the Tartar city. The latter is the smaller both in area and population, as it is said to contain about twelve square miles, while the Chinese city contains fifteen. In the dividing wall between the two sections there are three gates, and there are thirteen gates in the outer walls. In front of nearly every gate there is a sort of bastion or screen, so that you cannot see the gate as you approach it, but must turn to one side or the other to go in or out.

"The walls of the Tartar city average about fifty feet high,

some parts rising sixty feet from the ground, and others less than forty. They are from twenty-five to fifty feet thick, being perpendicular outside, but sloping considerably on their inner front, and there are buttresses or towers at intervals of fifty or sixty yards. The material mostly used for front and rear was brick, but in many places the wall is faced with stone. The middle of the wall is of earth or concrete, and in several places the brick or stone has fallen away, and reveals the mode of construction. The top of the wall is of concrete, in which blocks of stone were set.

"The walls of the Chinese city are about thirty feet high, and twenty-five feet thick; and altogether the walls of both parts of Peking have a linear distance of nearly twenty-four miles. The arches of the gates are well built; most of them are surmounted with pagodas pierced with port-holes, and in time of war they are armed with cannon.



A Ferry Near Peking.

"The Chinese city is more populous than the Tartar one, but contains fewer objects of interest. A day is sufficient for looking at its shops, and making the rounds of its temples. The most important is the *Tien-tan* or 'Temple of Heaven,' as it is generally called by foreigners. It stands in a large enclosure, and the central building is not open to the public, though it may usually be visited on payment of a fee to the custodians. It is roofed with blue tiles, and was once an edifice of great grandeur, but is now sadly dilapidated. Inside the temple there are altars where sacrifices are offered to the memory of former rulers of

China, and occasionally the emperor comes here to take part in the ceremonies.

"Opposite the *Tien-tan* is the *Ti-tan*, or 'Temple of Agriculture,' and in the grounds near it the emperor comes once a year to guide the plough with his own hands in honor of the deities to whom the building is dedicated. A little distance away are the Golden Fish-Ponds, where vast numbers of gold-fish are reared, and from the ponds a short walk will bring you to the principal

Peking Ladies Taking the Air.

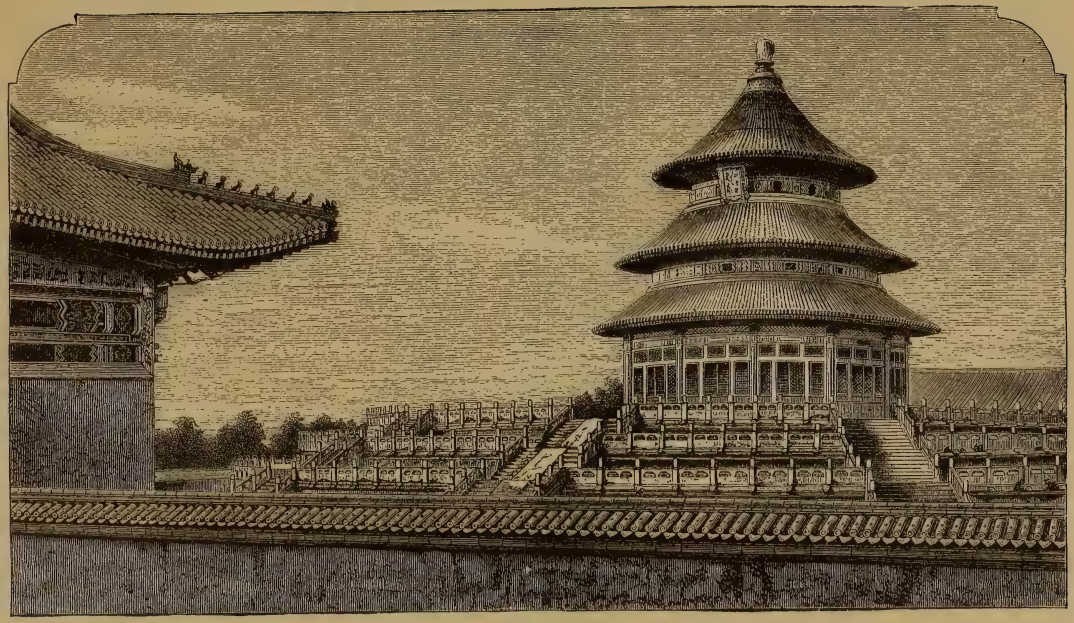
gate leading into the Tartar city. The main street through the Chinese city up to this gate is unusually wide for China, and is lined with booths and shops full of objects of interest to the stranger.

"The Tartar city consists of three enclosures, one inside the other; the innermost of these enclosures is called the Prohibited City, and is surrounded by a yellow wall about two miles in circumference. Yellow is the imperial color in China, and the tint

of the wall of the Prohibited City indicates its character. The emperor and his court live here, and the entire space is devoted to the buildings and gardens belonging immediately to the ruler of the most populous nation of the globe. It is always difficult and sometimes impossible for a stranger to obtain admission to the Prohibited City, but it can usually be done through the influence of the representative of one's country and the skilful use of money with Chinese officials. The buildings in the Prohibited City include the residences of members of the imperial family, the offices of the emperor's cabinet, and several temples of different kinds. Among the edifices are the 'Hall of Intense Thought,' where sacrifices are made to Confucius and other sages; the 'Hall of the Literary Abyss,' which contains an extensive library; and the 'Palace of Earth's Repose,' which is exclusively occupied by the empress and her court. Most of the palaces have gardens attached to them; the one belonging to the palace of the empress is said to be the prettiest of all, but though I tried very hard I was not permitted to see it.

"The enclosure around the Prohibited City is known as the Imperial City; it contains several palaces, temples, parks, and gardens; and has four gates opening to the cardinal points of the compass. The buildings in this city are chiefly occupied by the military guards and other attachés of the government, and it is laid out with wide roads and streets, which are very unusual for a Chinese city. There is an artificial lake in the Imperial City, and the view from the bridge over it is one of the most remarkable in all China.

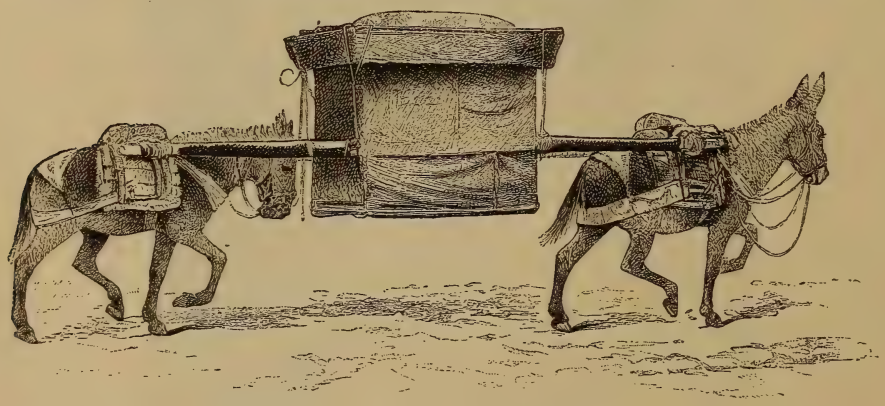
"The outer part of the Tartar city, surrounding the Imperial one, contains the foreign legations, the Protestant and Catholic missions, a Mohammedan mosque, an enormous lamisary where great numbers of Buddhist priests reside, a temple of Confucius, the Imperial Observatory (founded by the Emperor Kangshi under the direction of foreign missionaries, but now greatly neglected), and the Imperial Examination Hall. In this hall there are ten thousand cells where the students are shut up dur-



Temple of Heaven, at Peking

ing the examination and not allowed any communication with outsiders until they have written out their competitive exercises. The principal streets of this part of the Tartar city are of good width, but without pavements; they are lined with shops and constantly filled with people by night as well as by day. The smaller streets and lanes are dirty and unattractive, and the visitor who ventures in them is glad to get out again very quickly.

"I have given you a general outline of Peking as it is to-day. North of the city there are several temples and other objects of interest; the famous park, Yuen-min-Yuen, is about eight miles from Peking in a northeasterly direction, and is worth visiting for the sake of its beautiful gardens which remained after the destruc-



Mule Litter for Mountain Travelling.

tion of the palaces in 1860. Continuing your travels through the Nankow Pass to Chan-kia-kow, about one hundred miles altogether, you reach the Great Wall which has already been described. It is a hard journey, as it must be made on horseback or in a mule litter; carts may go to Nankow, about thirty miles, but from there through the Nankow Pass the road is not practicable for wheeled vehicles."

As the doctor sat down, one of the members of the Society asked him to describe a mule litter.

"It is a box or carriage," said he, "to be moved by mules or horses, in the same way that a sedan chair is carried by men.

It is hung on two long poles parallel to each other, and about as far apart as the shafts of a cart. One animal is fastened between the shafts in front and one in the rear; the animals go at a walk, and the motion is not at all disagreeable. But occasionally the fastenings get loose and the shafts fall to the ground; there is a commotion among the animals, and if the free one tries to run away the other may attempt to follow and drag the box after him. The traveller is badly shaken up, and not unfrequently sustains serious injury."

The audience passed a vote of thanks to the doctor for his interesting account of Peking, and then Frank resumed the reading of Marco's narrative.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF CAMBALUC.

Now there was on that spot in old times a great and noble city called CAMBALUC, which is as much as to say in our tongue "The City of the Emperor." But the Great Kaan was informed by the Astrologers that this city would prove rebellious, and raise great disorders against his imperial authority. So he caused the present city to be built close beside the old one, with only a river between them. And he caused the people of the old city to be removed to the new town that he had founded; and this is called TAIDU. However, he allowed a portion of the people which he did not suspect to remain in the old city, because the new one could not hold the whole of them, big as it is.

As regards the size of this new city, you must know that it has a compass of twenty-four miles, for each side of it hath a length of six miles, and it is four-square. And it is all walled round with walls of earth which have a thickness of full ten paces at bottom, and a height of more than ten paces; but they are not so thick at top, for they diminish in thickness as they rise, so that at top they are only about three paces thick. And they are provided throughout with loop-holed battlements, which are all whitewashed.

There are twelve gates, and over each gate there is a great and handsome palace, so that there are on each side of the square three gates and five palaces; for I ought to mention there is at each angle also a great

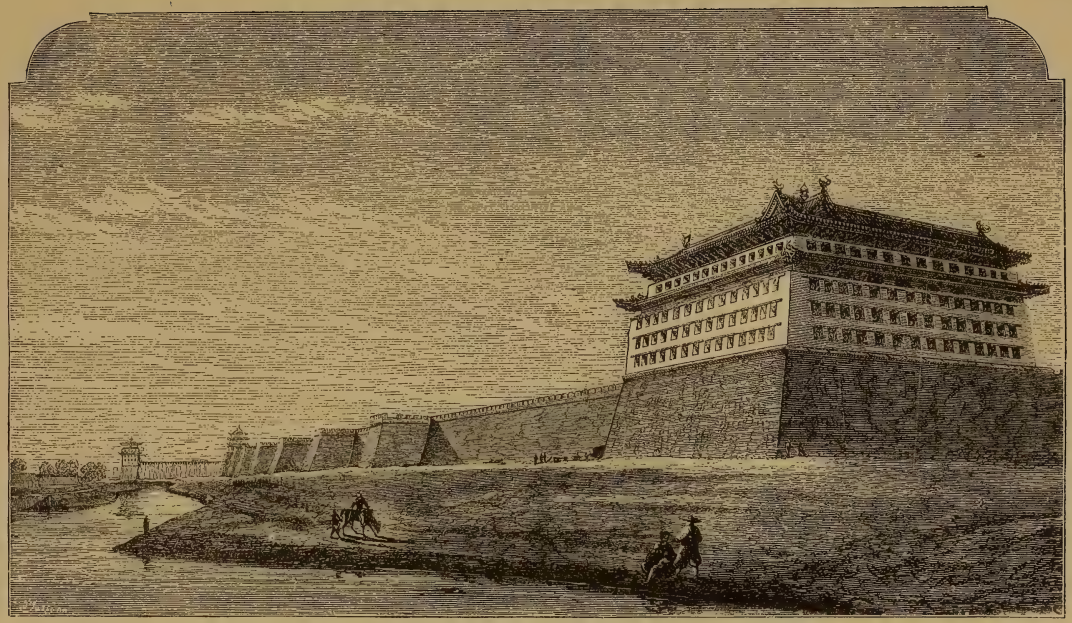
and handsome palace. In those palaces are vast halls, in which are kept the arms of the city garrison.

The streets are so straight and wide that you can see right along them from end to end and from one gate to the other. And up and down the city there are beautiful palaces, and many great and fine hostelries, and fine houses in great numbers. All the plots of ground on which the houses of the city are built are four-square, and laid out with straight lines; all the plots being occupied by great and spacious palaces, with courts and gardens of proportionate size. All these plots were assigned to different heads of families. Each square plot is encompassed by handsome streets for traffic; and thus the whole city is arranged in squares just like a chess-board, and disposed in a manner so perfect and masterly that it is impossible to give a description that should do it justice.

Moreover, in the middle of the city there is a great clock—that is to say, a bell—which is struck at night. And after it has struck three times no one must go out in the city, unless it be for the needs of the sick. And those who go about on such errands are bound to carry lanterns with them. Moreover, the established guard at each gate of the city is 1000 armed men; not that you are to imagine this guard is kept up for fear of any attack, but only as a guard of honor for the Sovereign, who resides there, and to prevent thieves from doing mischief in the town.

HOW THE GREAT KAAN MAINTAINS A GUARD OF TWELVE THOUSAND HORSE, WHICH ARE CALLED KESHICAN.

You must know that the Great Kaan, to maintain his state, hath a guard of twelve thousand horsemen, who are styled KESHICAN, which is as much as to say "Knights devoted to their Lord." Not that he keeps these for fear of any man whatever, but merely because of his own exalted dignity. These 12,000 men have four captains, each of whom is in command of 3000; and each body of 3000 takes a turn of three days and nights to guard the palace, where they also take their meals. After the expiration of three days and nights they are relieved by another 3000, who mount guard for the same space of time, and then another body takes its turn, so that there are always 3000 on guard. Thus it goes until the whole 12,000, who are styled, as I said, Keshican, have been



Walls of Peking.

on duty; and then the tour begins again, and so runs on from year's end to year's end.

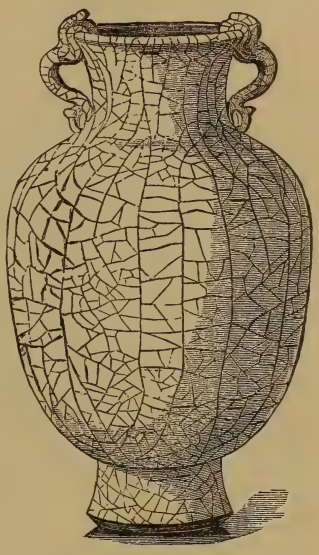
THE FASHION OF THE GREAT KAAN'S TABLE AT HIS HIGH FEASTS.

And when the Great Kaan sits at table on any great court occasion, it is in this fashion. His table is elevated a good deal above the others, and he sits at the north end of the hall, looking towards the south, with his chief wife beside him on the left. On his right sit his sons and his nephews, and other kinsmen of the Blood Imperial, but lower, so that their heads are on a level with the Emperor's feet. And then the other Barons sit at other tables lower still. So also with the women; for all the wives of the Lord's sons, and of his nephews and other kinsmen, sit at the lower table to his right; and below them again the ladies of the other Barons and Knights, each in the place assigned by the Lord's orders. The tables are so disposed that the Emperor can see the whole of them from end to end, many as they are. Further, you are not to suppose that everybody sits at table; on the contrary, the greater part of the soldiers and their officers sit at their meal in the hall on the carpets. Outside the hall will be found more than 40,000 people; for there is a great concourse of folk bringing presents to the Lord, or come from foreign countries with curiosities.

In a certain part of the hall near where the Great Kaan holds his table, there is set a large and very beautiful piece of workmanship in the form of a square coffer, or buffet, about three paces each way, exquisitely wrought with figures of animals, finely carved and gilt. The middle is hollow, and in it stands a great vessel of pure gold, holding as much as an ordinary butt; and at each corner of the great vessel is one of smaller size, of the capacity of a firkin, and from the former the wine or beverage flavored with fine and costly spices is drawn off into the latter. And on the buffet aforesaid are set all the Lord's drinking vessels, among which are certain pitchers of the finest gold, which are called *verniques*, and are big enough to hold drink for eight or ten persons. And one of these is put between every two persons, besides a couple of golden cups with handles, so that every man helps himself from the pitcher that stands between him and his neighbor. And the ladies are supplied in the same

way. The value of these pitchers and cups is something immense; in fact, the Great Kaan has such a quantity of this kind of plate, and of gold and silver in other shapes, as no one ever before saw or heard tell of, or could believe.

There are certain Barons specially deputed to see that foreigners, who do not know the customs of the Court, are provided with places suited to their rank; and these Barons are continually moving to and fro in the hall, looking to the wants of the guests at table, and causing the servants to supply them promptly with wine, milk, meat, or whatever they lack. At every door of the hall (or, indeed, wherever the Emperor may be) there stand a couple of big men like giants, one on each side, armed with staves. Their business is to see that no one steps upon the threshold in entering, and if this does happen, they strip the offender of his clothes, and he must pay a forfeit to have them back again; or in lieu of taking his clothes, they give him a certain number of blows. If they are foreigners ignorant of the order, then there are Barons appointed to introduce them, and explain it to them. They think, in fact, that it brings bad luck if any one touches the threshold.



Vase from the Emperor's Palace.

And you must know that those who wait upon the Great Kaan with his dishes and his drink are some of the great Barons. They have the mouth and nose muffled with fine napkins of silk and gold, so that no breath nor odor from their persons should taint the dish or the goblet presented to the Lord. And when the Emperor is going to drink, all the musical instruments, of which he has vast store of every kind, begin to play. And when he takes the cup all the Barons and the rest of the company drop on their knees and make the deepest obeisance before him, and then the Emperor doth drink. But each time that he does so the whole ceromony is repeated.

I will say nought about the dishes, as you may easily conceive that

there is a great plenty of every possible kind. But you should know that in every case where a Baron or Knight dines at those tables, their wives also dine there with the other ladies. And when all have dined and the tables have been removed, then come in a great number of players and jugglers, adepts at all sorts of wonderful feats, and perform before the Emperor and the rest of the company, creating great diversion and mirth, so that everybody is full of laughter and enjoyment. And when the performance is over, the company breaks up and every one goes to his quarters.

"You have doubtless observed," said Fred, "that there are many points of resemblance between the account which Polo gives of the city of Cambaluc six hundred years ago and what Dr. Allen has told us of the Peking of to-day. The present Tartar city stands on the site of Kublai's city of Taidu, but is only two thirds as large. The Mongols were expelled in 1368; the second king of the Ming dynasty, which succeeded the Mongols, cut off about a third of the old city. The walls of the portion which he abandoned still remain, but in a very ruined condition. The south front of the present Tartar city is the same as that of Kublai's, and the same is probably the case with the east and west sides.

"The 'great palaces' which Marco describes as crowning the gates of the city were practically the same as the towers of which the doctor has told us. The water-clocks which he tells about may be seen to-day in China, and the tower where the hours were struck and whence alarms of fire were sent out still exists, and may be seen by visitors to Peking.

"We have," continued Fred, "an interesting account of the way the palace was guarded. The custom is still retained in many of the courts of the East, though not on so grand a scale as here represented. We must bear in mind that it was before the days of gunpowder, and after his long association with soldiers armed with bows and arrows, it is not surprising that Marco should occasionally 'draw the long bow.'

"The same remark will apply to the Khan's mode of taking his dinner, which must have been a very serious meal. It is probable that the rest of the party were all in their places before the Khan entered the room, and that the dinner was more ceremonious than substantial. The butlers must have had a good deal to do in counting the silver after dinner, and making sure that the servants had carried away none of the valuables. The custom of having certain barons to explain the ways of the court to strangers is not materially changed in our time. At nearly all the courts of Europe, strangers are brought before the master of ceremonies and instructed in what they must do at a royal or imperial presentation."

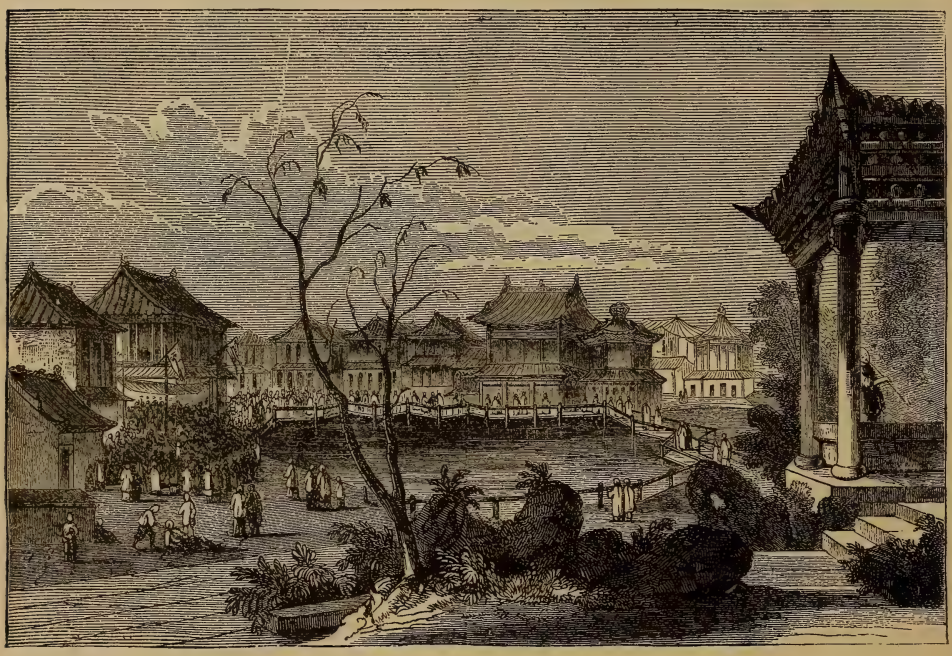
Lama of High Rank.

Some one asked about the custom of avoiding to step on the threshold and what was its significance.

Fred glanced inquiringly at the doctor, and the latter responded at once.

"Nobody can tell," said he, "exactly what it means, except that it was unlucky to step on the threshold on entering a house, a room, or a tent. The superstition has prevailed in many ages and countries, and is not unknown to-day. The Mongols have a proverb that it is a sin to step on the threshold. There is a certain etiquette to be observed on entering a Mongol tent; you must step over the ropes in a particular way, and to do otherwise will often give great offence. Strangers are generally excused on the ground of ignorance, but sometimes they will find themselves excluded from making a visit in consequence of their blundering."

Fred resumed his commentary by remarking that "the presence of a buffet, whence wine was served to the guests, was not peculiar to Kublai's dining-hall. It prevails more or less in various countries of the globe, but especially in Asia. In the tents of the Mongols and Kirghese the kumiss bottle is ready for every visitor; the Russians have adopted the custom by heating the samovar and serving tea whenever a visitor enters the house; and I have heard that it was formerly the practice in New Eng-



Scene in a Chinese Garden.

land farm-houses to bring a pitcher of cider when a stranger happened along or a neighbor dropped in. Even in New York and other cities hospitality is said frequently to take a form that might recall the customs of the court of the great Kublai.

"We have already seen how the jugglers entertained the Khan and his subjects, and therefore I will not detain you longer, but ask Frank to let us hear what is to follow."

Frank responded promptly to the request, and proceeded with the story.

CONCERNING THE GREAT FEAST HELD BY THE GRAND KAAN EVERY YEAR ON HIS BIRTHDAY.

You must know that the Tartars keep high festival yearly on their birthdays. And the Great Kaan was born on the 28th day of the September moon, so on that day is held the greatest feast of the year at the Kaan's Court, always excepting that which he holds on New Year's Day, of which I shall tell you afterwards.

Now, on his birthday, the Great Kaan dresses in the best of his robes, all wrought with beaten gold; and full 12,000 Barons and Knights on that day come forth dressed in robes of the same color, and precisely like those of the Great Kaan, except that they are not so costly; but still they are all of the same color as his, and are also of silk and gold. Every man so clothed has also a girdle of gold; and this as well as the dress is given him by the Sovereign. And I will aver that there are some of these suits decked with so many pearls and precious stones that a single suit shall be worth full 10,000 golden bezants.

And of such raiment there are several sets. For you must know that the Great Kaan, thirteen times in a year, presents to his Barons and Knights such suits of raiment as I am speaking of. And on each occasion they wear the same color that he does, a different color being assigned to each festival. Hence you may see what a huge business it is, and that there is no prince in the world but he alone who could keep up such customs as these.

On his birthday also, all the Tartars in the world, and all the countries and governments that owe allegiance to the Kaan, offer him great presents according to their several ability, and as prescription or orders have fixed the amount. And many other persons also come with great presents to the Kaan, in order to beg for some employment from him. And the Great Kaan has chosen twelve Barons on whom is laid the charge of assigning to each of these supplicants a suitable answer.

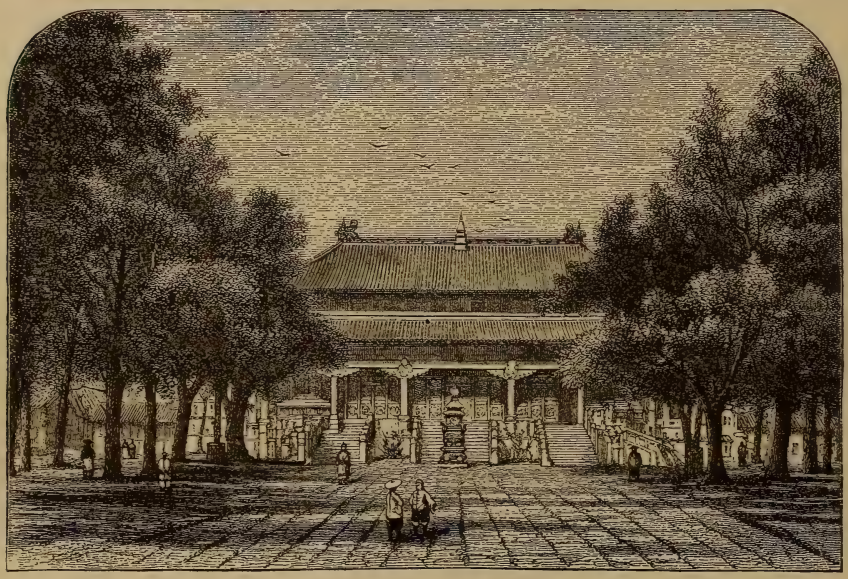
On this day likewise all the Idolaters, all the Saracens, and all the Christians and other descriptions of people make great and solemn

devotions, with much chaunting and lighting of lamps and burning of incense, each to the God whom he doth worship, praying that He would save the Emperor, and grant him long life and health and happiness.

And thus, as I have related, is celebrated the joyous feast of the Kaan's birthday.

OF THE GREAT FESTIVAL WHICH THE KAAN HOLDS ON NEW YEAR'S DAY.

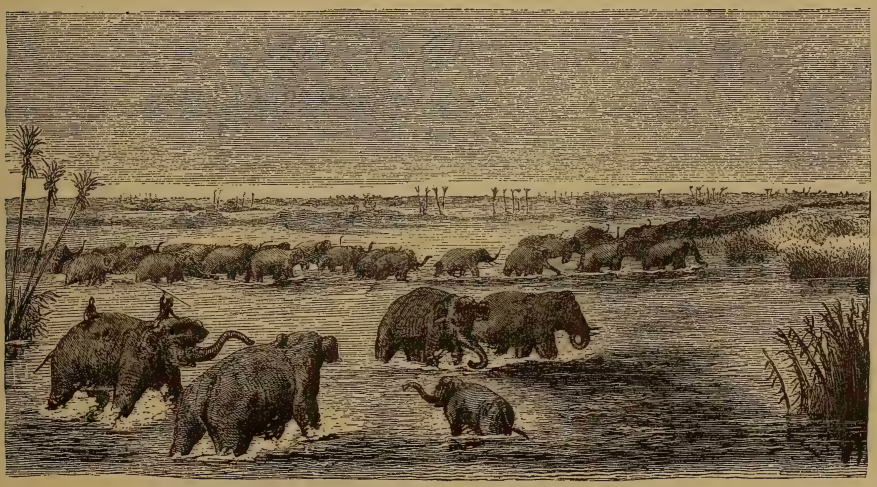
The beginning of their New Year is the month of February, and on that occasion the Great Kaan and all his subjects make such a Feast as I now shall describe.



Yellow Temple at Peking.

It is the custom that on this occasion the Kaan and all his subjects should be clothed entirely in white ; so, that day, everybody is in white, men and women, great and small. And this is done in order that they may thrive all through the year, for they deem that white clothing is lucky. On that day also all the people of all the provinces and governments and kingdoms and countries that own allegiance to the Kaan bring him great presents of gold and silver, and pearls and gems, and rich textures of divers kinds. And this they do that the Emperor throughout

the year may have abundance of treasure and enjoyment without care. And the people also make presents to each other of white things, and embrace and kiss and make merry, and wish each other happiness and good luck for the coming year. On that day, I can assure you, among the customary presents there shall be offered to the Kaan from various quarters more than 100,000 white horses, beautiful animals, and richly caparisoned. And you must know 't is their custom in offering presents to the Great Kaan (at least when the province making the present is able to do so), to present nine times nine articles. For instance, if a province sends horses, it sends nine times nine or 81 horses; of gold, nine times



The Royal Elephants Taking Their Bath.

nine pieces of gold, and so with stuffs or whatever else the present may consist of.

On that day also, the whole of the Kaan's elephants, amounting fully to 5000 in number, are exhibited, all covered with rich and gay housings of inlaid cloth representing beasts and birds, whilst each of them carries on his back two splendid coffers; all of these being filled with the Emperor's plate and other costly furniture required for the Court on the occasion of the White Feast. And these are followed by a vast number of camels which are likewise covered with rich housings and laden with

things needful for the Feast. All these are paraded before the Emperor, and it makes the finest sight in the world.

Moreover, on the morning of the Feast, before the tables are set, all the Kings, and all the Dukes, Marquesses, Counts, Barons, Knights, and Astrologers, and Philosophers, and Leeches, and Falconers, and other officials of sundry kinds from all the places roundabout, present themselves in the Great Hall before the Emperor; whilst those who can find no room to enter stand outside in such a position that the Emperor can see them all well. And the whole company is marshalled in this wise. First are the Kaan's sons, and his nephews, and the other Princes of the Blood Imperial; next to them all Kings; then Dukes, and then all others in succession according to the degree of each. And when they are all seated, each in his proper place, then a great prelate rises and says with a loud voice: "Bow and adore!" And as soon as he has said this, the company bow down until their foreheads touch the earth in adoration toward the Emperor as if he were a god. And this adoration they repeat four times, and then go to a highly decorated altar, on which is a vermilion tablet with the name of the Grand Kaan inscribed thereon, and a beautiful censer of gold. So they incense the tablet and the altar with great reverence, and then return each man to his seat.

When all have performed this, then the presents are offered, of which I have spoken as being so rich and costly. And after all have been offered and been seen by the Emperor, the tables are set, and all take their places at them with perfect order as I have already told you. And after dinner the jugglers come in and amuse the Court as you have heard before; and when that is over, every man goes to his quarters.

CONCERNING THE TWELVE THOUSAND BARONS WHO RECEIVE ROBES OF CLOTH OF GOLD FROM THE EMPEROR ON THE GREAT FESTIVALS, THIRTEEN CHANGES A-PIECE.

Now you must know that the Great Kaan hath set apart 12,000 of his men who are distinguished by the name of *Keshican*, as I have told you before; and on each of these 12,000 Barons he bestows thirteen changes of raiment, which are all different from one another: I mean that in one set the 12,000 are all of one color; the next 12,000 of another color, and

so on; so that they are of thirteen different colors. These robes are garnished with gems and pearls and other precious things in a very rich and costly manner. And along with each of these changes of raiment, *i. e.*, 13 times in the year, he bestows on each of those 12,000 Barons a fine golden girdle of great richness and value, and likewise a pair of boots of *Camut*, that is to say of *Borgal*, curiously wrought with silver thread; insomuch that when they are clothed in these dresses every man of them looks like a king! And there is an established order as to which dress is to be worn at each of those thirteen feasts. The Emperor himself also has his thirteen suits corresponding to those of his Barons; in *color*, I mean (though his are grander, richer, and costlier), so that he is always arrayed in the same color as his Barons, who are, as it were, his comrades. And you may see that all this costs an amount which it is scarcely possible to calculate.

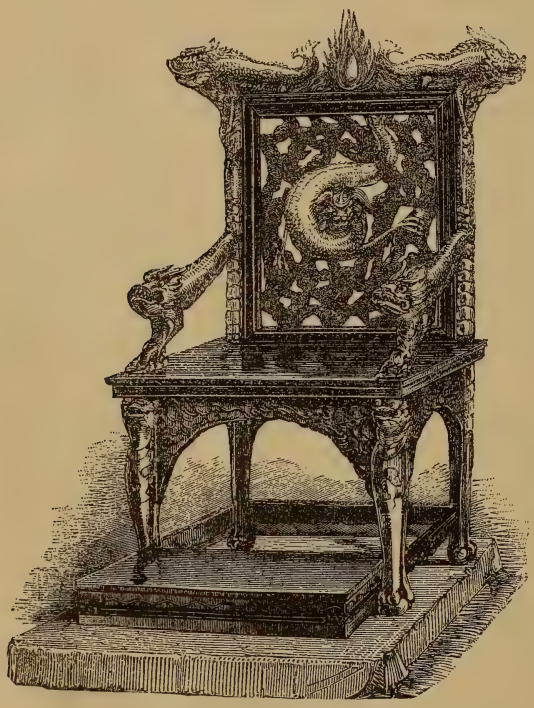
Now I have told you of the thirteen changes of raiment received from the Prince by those 12,000 Barons, amounting in all to 156,000 suits of so great cost and value, to say nothing of the girdles and the boots which are also worth a great sum of money. All this the Great Lord hath ordered, that he may attach the more of grandeur and dignity to his festivals.

And now I must mention another thing that I had forgotten, but which you will be astonished to learn from this Book. You must know that on the Feast Day a great Lion is led to the Emperor's presence, and as soon as it sees him it lies down before him with every sign of the greatest veneration, as if it acknowledged him for its lord; and it remains there lying before him, and entirely unchained. Truly this must seem a strange story to those who have not seen the thing!

The last statement did seem strange to the members of the Society, if we may judge by the exclamation of surprise that rippled through the assemblage. Fred suggested that it was likely the lion had been trained to perform his part in the imperial programme, and obeyed a sign given by his keeper. Lions have been paraded in royal and imperial processions in India and other parts of Asia, but they are always perfectly

docile, and so well fed that they have no disposition to make a dinner off their distinguished entertainer.

"The festival of the Tartars corresponds to the Chinese New Year," said Fred, in explanation of the custom at Kublai's court. "The story of the Khan's liberality," he continued, "is somewhat reduced in splendor when we bear in mind Marco's account of the presents that are offered to his Majesty, and which probably more than cover the cost of what he gives away to his followers. Orientals generally expect a return for their gifts to the full amount of their value, so that they really lose nothing by the transaction; it is highly probable that Kublai had an eye to business, as we read that the amount of the gifts was settled by 'prescription or orders.' And it is not unknown in our day and among us," he continued, with a smile, "that sometimes the maker of a present is disappointed if he receives nothing in return, or something far below the value of his gift."



A Chair of State.

Fred's smile was repeated on the faces of his listeners, or at all events on those of the older heads among them. One of the youths remarked that the Khan's followers were well provided with clothing, and each must have needed a Saratoga trunk to hold his possessions. "What a pity," he continued, "that Marco did not tell us how all this large stock of garments was carried about."

Fred explained that it was believed an error had crept into some of the manuscripts of Polo's narrative, and that we should read three instead of thirteen. According to the Mongol histories it was the custom to hold three great festivals in a year, and raiment was distributed on each of those occasions. These festivals were New Year's Day or the White Feast, the Khan's Birthday, and the Feast of the Herds. Another writer mentions four festivals in the year, and Polo is the only one who has mentioned thirteen.

"The first month of the year," he continued, "is called by the Mongols *Chaghan Sara* or 'The White Month,' and the wearing of white clothing on that day is purely a Mongol custom. With the Chinese, white is the color for mourning, and after the Mongols had been expelled from China it was ordered that no one should appear in white at any of the court festivals.

"We have already seen the preference for odd numbers among the Chinese," said Fred, after a slight pause, "and we now have a suggestion of the importance of the number nine. It has been held in many countries and ages to have mystic value, which arises doubtless from its well-known peculiarities. In the case of the Khan it was of especial value, as the number multiplied by itself made a good figure when horses or other valuable things were to be enumerated. It still holds high rank in parts of the East. In speaking of the marriage customs in Central Asia, Vambery says the question is how many times *nine* sheep, cows, camels, or horses the father is to receive for giving up his daughter.

"I am sorry to say there are now no elephants at the court of Peking, though one was kept there until a few years ago. And I am afraid it would have required liberal enumeration to carry the herd of Kublai up to five thousand, as Marco represents it to have been.

"The custom of bowing before the emperor on festivals is as old as royalty itself, and prevails to-day, so that there is nothing remarkable in Polo's account of the ceremonies at

Kublai's court. Worshipping the tablets is a Chinese custom which has descended to our day, and was probably adopted by Kublai soon after he ascended the throne."

Fred took his seat, and Frank rose to read; but the president looked at the clock and suggested an adjournment, as it was so near the usual hour of closing that it was not worth their while to begin anew. Fred approved the suggestion, especially as he desired further time to arrange his notes. Frank was by no means desirous to read any more until the next evening, and it was speedily agreed to close the exercises at once.

CHAPTER XII.

Kublai Khan's Hunting Expeditions—Chinese Game Laws in the Twelfth Century—Imperial Sport on a Grand Scale—Further Description of Cambaluc—How Kublai Made Money of the Bark of Trees—Shrewd Methods of Business—A Chinese Bank-Note of the Ming Dynasty.

"We have seen the Khan at home," said Frank, when the Society assembled for a continuation of the story. "We will now see what he does on his hunting excursions," and with this preliminary hint of what was coming he resumed the narrative where it had been interrupted on the previous evening.

HOW THE GREAT KAAN ENJOINETH HIS PEOPLE TO SUPPLY HIM WITH GAME.

The three months of December, January, and February, during which the Emperor resides at his Capital City, are assigned for hunting and fowling, to the extent of some forty days' journey round the city; and it is ordained that the larger game taken be sent to the Court. To be more particular: of all the larger beasts of the chase, such as boars, roebucks, bucks, stags, lions, bears, &c., the greater part of what is taken has to be sent, and feathered game likewise. The animals are dressed and despatched to the Court on carts. This is done by all the people within twenty or thirty days' journey, and the quantity so despatched is immense. Those at a greater distance cannot send the game, but they have to send the skins after tanning them, and these are employed in the making of equipments for the Emperor's army.

OF THE LIONS AND LEOPARDS AND WOLVES THAT THE KAAN KEEPS FOR THE CHASE.

The Emperor hath numbers of leopards trained to the chase, and hath also a great many lynxes taught in like manner to catch game, and

which afford excellent sport. He hath also several great Lions, bigger than those of Babylonia, beasts whose skins are colored in the most beautiful way, being striped all along the sides with black, red, and white. These are trained to catch boars and wild cattle, bears, wild asses, stags, and other great or fierce beasts. And 't is a rare sight, I can tell you, to see those Lions giving chase to such beasts as I have mentioned! When they are to be so employed the Lions are taken out in a covered cart, and every Lion has a little doggie with him. They are obliged to approach the game against the wind, otherwise the animals would scent the approach of the Lion and be off.

There are also a great number of eagles, all broken to catch wolves, foxes, deer, and wild-goats, and they do catch them in great numbers. But those especially that are trained to wolf-catching are very large and powerful birds, and no wolf is able to get away from them.

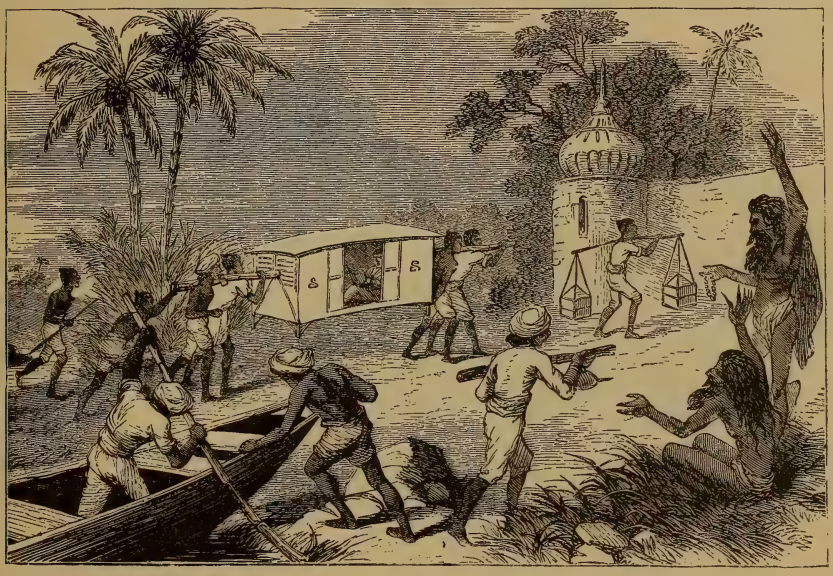
CONCERNING THE TWO BROTHERS WHO HAVE CHARGE OF THE KAAN'S HOUNDS.

The Emperor hath two Barons who are own brothers, one called Baian, and the other Mingan; and these two are styled *Chinuchi* (or *Cunichi*), which is as much as to say, "The Keepers of the Mastiff Dogs." Each of these brothers hath 10,000 men under his orders; each body of 10,000 being dressed alike, the one in red and the other in blue, and whenever they accompany the Lord to the chase, they wear this livery, in order to be recognized. Out of each body of 10,000 there are 2000 men who are each in charge of one or more great mastiffs, so that the whole number of these is very large. And when the Prince goes a-hunting, one of those Barons, with his 10,000 men and something like 5000 dogs, goes towards the right, whilst the other goes towards the left with his party in like manner. They move along, all abreast of one another, so that the whole line extends over a full day's journey, and no animal can escape

A Hunting Leopard.

them. Truly it is a glorious sight to see the working of the dogs and the huntsmen on such an occasion! And as the Lord rides a-fowling across the plains, you will see these big hounds coming tearing up, one pack after a bear, another pack after a stag, or some other beast, as it may hap, and running the game down now on this side and now on that, so that it is really a most delightful sport and spectacle.

The Two Brothers I have mentioned are bound by the tenure of their office to supply the Kaan's Court from October to the end of March with



Starting for a Hunt.

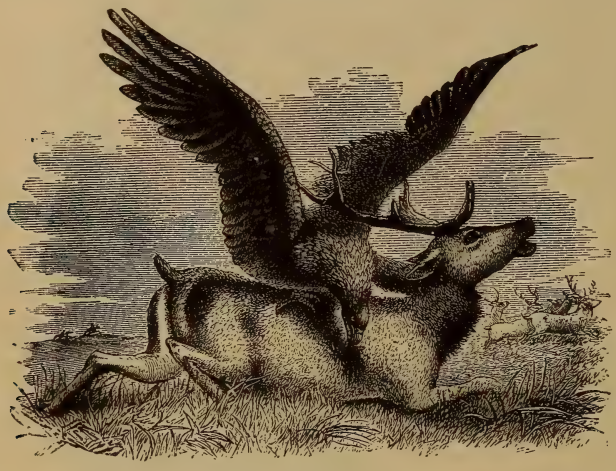
1000 head of game daily, whether of beasts or birds, and not counting quails; and also with fish to the best of their ability, allowing fish enough for three persons to reckon as equal to one head of game.

Now I have told you of the Masters of the Hounds and all about them, and next will I tell you how the Lord goes off on an expedition for the space of three months.

HOW THE EMPEROR GOES ON A HUNTING EXPEDITION.

After he has stopped at his capital city those three months that I mentioned, to wit, December, January, February, he starts off on the 1st

day of March, and travels southward toward the Ocean Sea, a journey of two days. He takes with him full 10,000 falconers, and some 500 gerfalcons besides peregrines, sakers, and other hawks in great numbers; and goshawks also to fly at the water-fowl. But do not suppose that he keeps all these together by him; they are distributed about, hither and thither, one hundred together, or two hundred at the utmost, as he thinks proper. But they are always fowling as they advance, and the most part of the quarry taken is carried to the Emperor. And let me tell you when he goes thus a-fowling with his gerfalcons and other kawks, he is attended by full 10,000 men, who are disposed in couples; and these are called *Toscaol*, which is as much as to say, "Watchers." And the name describes their business. They are posted from spot to spot, always in couples, and thus they cover a great deal of ground! Every man of them is provided with a whistle and a hood, so as to be able to call in a hawk and hold it in hand. And when the Emperor makes a cast, there is no need that he follow it up, for those men I speak of keep so good a look-out that they never lose sight of the birds, and if these have need of help they are ready to render it.



Eagle Killing a Deer.

All the Emperor's hawks, and those of the Barons as well, have a little label attached to the leg to mark them, on which is written the names of the owner and the keeper of the bird. And in this way the hawk, when caught, is at once identified and handed over to its owner. But if not, the bird is carried to a certain Baron who is styled the *Bularguchi*, which is as much as to say, "The Keeper of Lost Property." And I tell you that whatever may be found without a known owner, whether it be a

horse, or a sword, or a hawk, or what not, it is carried to that Baron straightway, and he takes charge of it. And if the finder neglects to carry his trover to the Baron, the latter punishes him. Likewise the loser of any article goes to the Baron, and if the thing be in his hands it is immediately given up to the owner. Moreover, the said Baron always pitches on the highest spot of the camp, with his banner displayed, in order that those who have lost or found any thing may have no difficulty in finding their way to him. Thus nothing can be lost but it shall be incontinently found and restored.

Riding in a Camel Litter.

And so the Emperor follows this road that I have mentioned, leading along in the vicinity of the Ocean Sea (which is within two days' journey of his capital city Cambaluc), and as he goes there is many a fine sight to be seen, and plenty of the very best entertainment in hawking; in fact, there is no sport in the world to equal it!

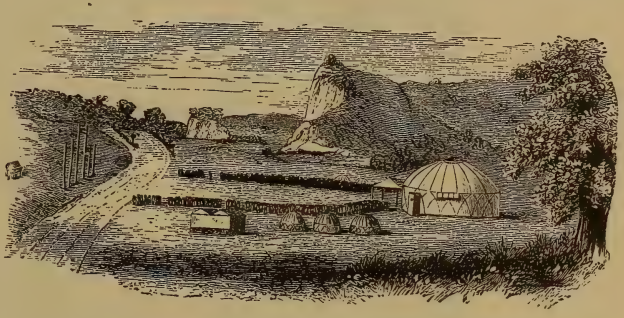
The Emperor himself is carried upon four elephants in a fine chamber made of timber, lined inside with plates of beaten gold, and outside with

lions' skins, for he always travels in this way on his fowling expeditions, because he is troubled with gout. He always keeps beside him a dozen of his choicest gerfalcons, and is attended by several of his Barons who ride on horseback alongside. And sometimes, as they may be going along, and the Emperor from his chamber is holding discourse with the Barons, one of the latter shall exclaim: "Sire! Look out for Cranes!" Then the Emperor instantly has the top of his chamber thrown open, and having marked the cranes he casts one of his gerfalcons, whichever he pleases; and often the quarry is struck within his view, so that he has the most exquisite sport and diversion there, as he sits in his chamber or lies on his bed; and all the Barons with him get the enjoyment of it likewise! So it is not without reason I tell you that I do not believe there ever existed in the world, or ever will exist, a man with such sport and enjoyment as he has, or with such rare opportunities.

And when he has travelled till he reaches a place called CACHAR MODUN, there he finds his tents pitched, with the tents of his Sons, and his Barons, and those of his Ladies and theirs, so that there shall be full 10,000 tents in all, and all fine and rich ones. And I will tell you how his own quarters are disposed. The tent in which he holds his courts is large enough to give cover easily to a thousand souls. It is pitched with its door to the south, and the Barons and Knights remain in waiting in it, whilst the Lord abides in another close to it on the west side. When he wishes to speak with any one he causes the person to be summoned to that other tent. Immediately behind the great tent there is a fine large chamber where the Lord sleeps; and there are also many other tents and chambers, but they are not in contact with the Great Tent as these are. The two audience-tents and the sleeping-chamber are constructed in this way. Each of the audience-tents has three poles, which are of spice-wood, and are most artfully covered with lions' skins, striped with black and white and red, so that they do not suffer from any weather. All three apartments are also covered outside with similar skins of striped lions, a substance that lasts for ever. And inside they are all lined with ermine and sable, these two being the finest and most costly furs in existence. For a robe of sable, large enough to line a mantle, is worth 2000 bezants of gold, or 1000 at least, and this kind of skin is

called by the Tartars "The King of Furs." The beast itself is about the size of a marten. These two furs of which I speak are applied and inlaid so exquisitely, that it is really something worth seeing. All the tent-ropes are of silk. And in short I may say that those tents, to wit the two audience-halls and the sleeping-chamber, are so costly that it is not every king could pay for them.

Round about these tents are others, also fine ones and beautifully pitched, in which are the Emperor's ladies, and the ladies of the other princes and officers. And then there are the tents for the hawks and their keepers, so that altogether the number of tents there on the plain is something wonderful. To see the many people that are thronging to and fro on every side and every day there, you would take the camp for a good big city. For you must reckon the Leeches, and the Astrologers, and the Falconers, and all the other attendants on so great a company; and add that every-body there has his whole family with him, for such is their custom.



The Emperor's Hunting Tents.

The Lord remains encamped there until the spring, and all that time he does nothing but go hawking round about among the canebrakes along the lakes and rivers that abound in that region, and across fine plains on which are plenty of cranes and swans, and all sorts of other fowl. The other gentry of the camp also are never done with hunting and hawking, and every day they bring home great store of venison and feathered game of all sorts. Indeed, without having witnessed it, you would never believe what quantities of game are taken, and what marvellous sport and diversion they all have whilst they are in camp there.

There is another thing I should mention; to wit, that for twenty days' journey round the spot nobody is allowed, be he who he may, to keep hawks or hounds, though anywhere else whosoever list may keep

them. And furthermore, throughout all the Emperor's territories, nobody, however audacious, dares to hunt any of these four animals, to wit, hare, stag, buck, and roe, from the month of March to the month of October. Anybody who should do so would rue it bitterly. But those people are so obedient to their Lord's commands, that even if a man were to find one of those animals asleep by the roadside he would not touch it for the world? And thus the game multiplies at such a rate that the whole country swarms with it, and the Emperor gets as much as

Archway Erected under the Mongol Dynasty.

he could desire. Beyond the term I have mentioned, however, to wit, that from March to October, everybody may take these animals as he list.

After the Emperor has tarried in that place, enjoying his sport as I have related, from March to the middle of May, he moves with all his people, and returns straight to his capital city of Cambaluc (which is also the capital of Cathay as you have been told), but all the while continuing to take his diversion in hunting and hawking as he goes along.

REHEARSAL OF THE WAY THE YEAR OF THE GREAT KAAN IS DISTRIBUTED.

On arriving at his capital of Cambaluc, he stays in his palace three days and no more; during which time he has great court entertainments and rejoicings. He then quits his palace at Cambaluc, and proceeds to that city which he has built, as I told you before, and which is called Chandu, where he has that grand park and palace of cane, and where he keeps his gerfalcons in mew. There he spends the summer, to escape the heat, for the situation is a very cool one. After stopping there from the beginning of May to the 28th of August, he takes his departure (that is the time when they sprinkle the white mares' milk as I told you), and returns to his capital Cambaluc. There he stops, as I have told you also, the month of September, to keep his Birthday Feast, and also throughout October, November, December, January, and February, in which last month he keeps the grand feast of the New Year, which they call the White Feast, as you have heard already with all particulars. He then sets out on his march towards the Ocean Sea, hunting and hawking, and continues out from the beginning of March to the middle of May, and then comes back for three days only to the capital, during which he makes merry, and holds a great court and grand entertainments. In truth, 't is something astonishing, the magnificence displayed by the Emperor in those three days, and then he starts off again as you know.

Thus his whole year is distributed in the following manner: six months at his chief palace in the royal city of Cambaluc, to wit, *September, October, November, December, January, February.*

Then on the great hunting expedition towards the sea, *March, April, May;*

Then back to his palace at Cambaluc for *three days;*

Then off to the city of Chandu which he has built, and where the Cane Palace is, where he stays *June, July, August;*

Then back again to his capital city of Cambaluc.

So thus the whole year is spent; six months at the capital, three months in hunting, and three months at the Cane Palace to avoid the heat. And in this way he passes his time with the greatest enjoyment;

not to mention occasional journeys in this or that direction at his own pleasure.

Here Frank paused and sat down. Fred rose immediately, and was evidently well prepared for his share of the evening's entertainment.

"Marco has given us," said he, "an excellent account of the customs of royal hunters before the invention of gunpowder. Always bearing in mind that he is evidently somewhat free with

Wild Asses in the Mongolian Desert.

figures, we may be confident that the picture of the Khan's hunting excursions is a good one. In Polo's time hawking was a fashionable sport throughout Europe, and if his memory failed him at any point, he had only to revive in his mind the practices of European courts. The training of the hawks and hounds, the manner of letting loose the leopards, the duties of the watchers and beaters, and the manner of driving in the game, are all accurately described.

"It is evident that when he speaks of lions used for hunting he refers to the *cheetah*, or hunting-leopards; in fact his portrait of the animal leaves no great room for doubt on this point, though he may have had the tiger in his mind. The cheetah is still kept for hunting purposes by native princes in India, and also in Persia. Though belonging to the leopard family, it is quite unlike the true leopard, as its limbs are longer and more lanky, and its claws are not retractile, as in most members of the feline race.

"The cheetah had been used in Europe before Polo's time, and was introduced into France about the fifteenth century. India is the country where he has been most extensively employed, and we read that the Emperor Akbar had a thousand cheetahs in his hunting establishment. Perhaps Dr. Allen will tell us about his experience with these animals, and I 'm sure we shall all be pleased to hear it."

Thus appealed to, the doctor rose and was greeted with the signs of delight with which his words were always welcomed.

"When I was in India," said he, "I was invited by one of the native princes of Baroda to go on a hunting excursion. We started very early in the morning, and I was surprised to observe that neither the prince nor myself was provided with a gun—usually considered a necessary weapon of the chase. I said nothing, however, but waited developments.

"There were ten or twelve of us on horseback, and perhaps twenty attendants on foot. Four men carried a mysterious-looking box by means of a pole resting on their shoulders, and I observed that it was handled with great care. We kept on for two or three miles, and then the scouts who were out in front made a signal for us to stop.

"We stopped and the box was brought forward and opened. Inside there lay a cheetah with a skin so sleek that it fairly glistened in the sunlight; he was fastened by a small chain, and had a hood of leather over his eyes.

"Half a dozen deer were in sight three or four hundred yards

away. The cheetah was taken from his box, and led a short distance with his head in the direction of the deer. Then the hood was taken from his eyes and the chain from his neck.

"In a few moments he caught sight of the deer. He immediately crouched to the ground, and crept along exactly as a cat creeps for a mouse or bird. Taking advantage of every bush and every inequality of the earth, he continued his approach in this manner until the deer saw him and started to run away. Then in three or four enormous bounds he was on the back of

An Asiatic Hunting Scene.

one of them and fixed his teeth in its neck. The mounted attendants went forward at a gallop, and with some difficulty took the cheetah from his prey. He was rewarded with a piece of meat, the hood and chain were replaced, and the animal was restored to his box. Then we went on again as before, and when we found another group of deer the performance was repeated. The deer were not at all alarmed at the presence of our party, as they are accustomed to see men on foot or mounted in the fields and for-

ests daily. It was only when they saw the cheetah that they became frightened, and then it was too late to escape. Once the cheetah failed to catch his intended prey, and he came sneaking back to the hunters with a decided expression of shame. He always seized on the largest of the bucks, and I was told that he never attacked does or fawns unless there were no bucks in a herd. Sometimes he gets the worst of it, and the horns of the bucks prove more than a match for his claws.

"On another occasion our party was mounted in the common carts of the country, instead of going on horseback. The cheetah was carried on one of the carts, and let loose as before when quite near the game. Antelopes and deer are so accustomed to the sight of carts that they allow them to come very close to where they are feeding; they are not hunted often, and therefore do not appreciate the wiles of the sportsmen in time to escape from danger.

"While on the subject, I will tell you about hunting with the eagle, as I once took part in an affair of this kind. The falcon is used for feathered game and the eagle for quadrupeds; the former is let off when ducks and similar birds are to be taken, and the latter for deer, foxes, wolves, and the like. No dogs are taken along in hunting with eagles, as they would be sure to be killed; but they sometimes accompany the hunters when falcons only are used.

"On the occasion I mention the eagle was mounted on a perch to which he was chained, and his head was covered with a hood. We reached the hunting ground and stirred up two or three hyenas, which our leaders did not consider worth attacking. After a time several deer were seen a quarter of a mile away, and the keeper of the eagle was ordered to let him loose. His chain was unfastened and the hood removed; as soon as this was done he rose to a great height and wheeled around in a circle. He seemed to have missed the game, and I wondered what he would do.

"Suddenly he flapped his wings three or four times, and then

swept as straight as an arrow towards one of the deer. We were all well mounted, and rode as fast as we could towards the animal, but he was dead before we reached him. The eagle would not let go of him until his head had been covered with the hood, when he submitted at once."

As the doctor paused, one of the youths near him asked if game was as abundant in the neighborhood of Peking as in Polo's time.

Fight between Eagles and Wolves.

"There is a fair amount of game in Mongolia," was the reply, "but the hunters would have no such good luck to-day as in the period when Kublai Khan was on the throne. You must remember that Polo says the game was carefully preserved in the Khan's hunting ground, and no one could keep hawks or hounds there. We are not to suppose that it was close to the city, but in the

country in the direction of the ocean. It is a hundred miles from Peking to the nearest point where the ocean can be reached, and it is probable that the imperial hunting ground was north of the Great Wall and eastward toward the Gulf of Pechili. The regulations of the chase in Kublai's time were much like those of modern days. There was a close season for certain kinds of game, and the violators of the law were severely punished; we are not told what the penalty was for hunting in the royal preserves, but may be sure it was very severe. According to the custom of the time it was hardly any thing less than decapitation for the first offence. The same individual was not likely to be arrested or punished more than once."

Interior of an Oriental Caravansary.

As the doctor sat down Fred whispered to Frank that he had no more comments to offer. Thereupon Frank resumed the narration.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF CAMBALUC, AND ITS GREAT TRAFFIC AND POPULATION.

You must know that the city of Cambaluc hath such a multitude of houses, and such a vast population inside the walls and outside, that it

seems quite past all possibility. There is a suburb outside each of the gates, which are twelve in number; and these suburbs are so great that they contain more people than the city itself, for the suburb of one gate spreads in width till it meets the suburb of the next, whilst they extend in length some three or four miles. In those suburbs lodge the foreign merchants and travellers, of whom there are always great numbers who have come to bring presents to the Emperor, or to sell articles at Court, or because the city affords so good a mart to attract traders. There are in each of the suburbs, to a distance of a mile from the city, numerous fine hostelries for the lodgment of merchants from different parts of the world, and a special hostelry is assigned to each description of people, as if we should say there is one for the Lombards, another for the Germans, and a third for the Frenchmen. And thus there are as many good houses outside of the city as inside, without counting those that belong to the great lords and barons, which are very numerous.

You must know that it is forbidden to bury any dead body inside the city. If the body be that of an Idolater it is carried out beyond the city and suburbs to a remote place assigned for the purpose, to be burnt. And if it be of one belonging to a religion the custom of which is to bury, such as the Christian, the Saracen, or what not, it is also carried out beyond the suburbs to a distant place assigned for the purpose. And thus the city is preserved in a better and more healthy state.

Guards patrol the city every night in parties of thirty or forty, looking out for any persons who may be abroad at unseasonable hours, *i. e.*, after the great bell hath stricken thrice. If they find any such person he is immediately taken to prison, and examined next morning by the proper officers. If these find him guilty of any misdemeanor, they order him a proportionate beating with the stick. Under this punishment people sometimes die; but they adopt it in order to eschew bloodshed; for their *Bacsis* say that it is an evil thing to shed man's blood.

To this city also are brought articles of greater cost and rarity, and in greater abundance of all kinds, than to any other city in the world. For people of every description, and from every region, bring things (including all the costly wares of India, as well as the fine and precious goods of Cathay itself with its provinces), some for the sovereign, some for the court,

some for the city which is so great, some for the crowds of Barons and Knights, some for the great hosts of the Emperor which are quartered round about; and thus between court and city the quantity brought in is endless.

As a sample, I tell you, no day in the year passes that there do not enter the city 1000 cart-loads of silk alone, from which are made quantities of cloth of silk and gold, and of other goods. And this is not to be wondered at; for in all the countries round about there is no flax, so that every thing has to be made of silk. It is true, indeed, that in some parts of the country there is cotton and hemp, but not sufficient for their wants. This, however, is not of much consequence, because silk is so abundant and cheap, and is a more valuable substance than either flax or cotton.

Round about this great city of Cambaluc there are some 200 other cities at various distances, from which traders come to sell their goods and buy others for their lords; and all find means to make their sales and purchases, so that the traffic of the city is passing great.

"The next chapter," said Frank, "is a dreary account of the treason of one of the Khan's officials, and its discovery and punishment. Unless some one particularly desires to hear it, I will go on to the next.

In compliance with the old adage, silence gave assent and Frank proceeded.

HOW THE GREAT KAAN CAUSETH THE BARK OF TREES, MADE INTO SOMETHING LIKE PAPER, TO PASS FOR MONEY OVER ALL HIS COUNTRY.

Now that I have told you in detail of the splendour of this City of the Emperor's, I shall proceed to tell you of the Mint which he hath in the same city, in the which he hath his money coined and struck, as I shall relate to you. And in doing so I shall make manifest to you how it is that the Great Lord may well be able to accomplish even much more than I have told you, or am going to tell you, in this Book. For, tell it how I might, you never would be satisfied that I was keeping within truth and reason!

The Emperor's Mint then is in this same City of Cambaluc, and the way it is wrought is such that you might say he hath the Secret of Alchemy in perfection, and you would be right! For he makes his money after this fashion.

He makes them take the bark of a certain tree, in fact of the Mulberry Tree, the leaves of which are the food of the silkworms,—these trees being so numerous that whole districts are full of them. What they take is a certain fine white bast or skin which lies between the wood of the tree and the thick outer bark, and this they make into something resembling sheets of paper, but black. When these sheets have been prepared they are cut up into pieces of different sizes. The smallest of these sizes is worth a half tornesel; the next, a little larger, one tornesel; one, a little larger still, is worth half a silver groat of Venice; another, a whole groat; others yet, two groats, five groats, and ten groats. There is also a kind worth one Bezant of gold, and others of three Bezants, and so up to ten. All these pieces of paper are issued with as much solemnity and authority as if they were of pure gold or silver; and on every piece a variety of officials, whose duty it is, have to write their names, and to put their seals. And when all is prepared duly, the chief officer deputed by the Kaan smears the seal entrusted to him with vermilion, and impresses it on the paper, so that the form of the Seal remains printed upon it in red; the Money is then authentic. Any one forging it would be punished with death. And the Kaan causes every year to be

Japanese God of Wealth.

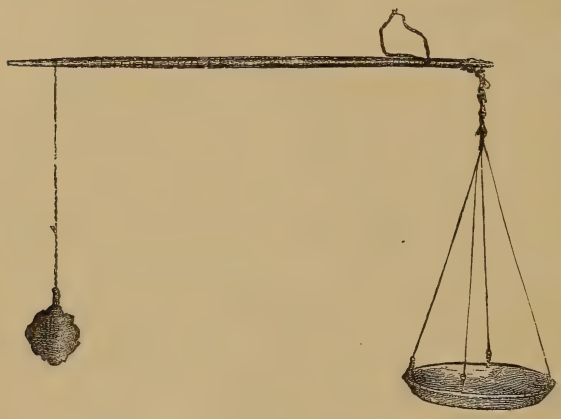
made such a vast quantity of this money, which costs him nothing, that it must equal in amount all the treasure in the world.

With these pieces of paper, made as I have described, he causes all payments on his own account to be made; and he makes them to pass current universally over all his kingdoms and provinces and territories, and whithersoever his power and sovereignty extends. And nobody, however important he may think himself, dares to refuse them on pain of death. And indeed everybody takes them readily, for wheresoever a person may go throughout the great Kaan's dominions he shall find these pieces of paper current, and shall be able to transact all sales and purchases of goods by means of them just as well as if they were coins of pure gold. And all the while they are so light that ten bezants' worth does not weigh one golden bezant.

Furthermore, all merchants arriving from India or other countries, and bringing with them gold or silver or gems and pearls, are prohibited from selling to any one but the Emperor. He has twelve experts chosen for this business, men of shrewdness and experience in such affairs; these appraise the articles, and the Emperor then pays a liberal price for them in those pieces of paper. The merchants accept his price readily, for in the first place they would not get so good an one from anybody else, and secondly they are paid without any delay. And with this paper-money they can buy what they like anywhere over the Empire, whilst it is also vastly lighter to carry about on their journeys. And it is a truth that the merchants will several times in the year bring wares to the amount of 400,000 bezants, and the Grand Sire pays for all in that paper. So he buys such a quantity of those precious things every year that his treasure is endless, whilst all the time the money he pays away costs him nothing at all. Moreover, several times in the year proclamation is made through the city that any one who may have gold or silver or gems or pearls, by taking them to the Mint, shall get a handsome price for them. And the owners are glad to do this, because they would find no other purchaser give so large a price. Thus the quantity they bring in is marvellous, though those who do not choose to do so may let it alone. Still, in this way, nearly all the valuables in the country come into the Kaan's possession.

When any of those pieces of paper are spoilt—not that they are so very flimsy neither—the owner carries them to the Mint, and by paying three per cent. on the value he gets new pieces in exchange. And if any Baron, or any one else soever, hath need of gold or silver or gems or pearls, in order to make plate, or girdles, or the like, he goes to the Mint and buys as much as he list, paying in this paper-money.

"The account of the suburbs of Cambaluc," said Fred, "will answer very well for those of Peking as it exists to-day. In describing the currency of Kublai Khan Marco indulges in the only joke that is to be found in his book, where he says the emperor has the secret of alchemy to perfection in making his money from the bark of trees."



Chinese Scales for Weighing Silver.

Some one in the audience asked if Kublai was the inventor of paper-money.

"By no means," responded Fred, "though he is often credited with it. Paper currency was issued in China in the beginning of the ninth century, and the histories say that as early as 1160 the empire was filled with paper that was greatly depreciated in value owing to the enormous issue. The dynasty that preceded Kublai's continued the practice, and the Mongols themselves issued paper-money long before they conquered China. Colonel Yule says 'Kublai made such an issue in the first year of his reign (1260), and continued to issue notes copiously till the end. In 1287 he put out a complete new currency, one note of which was to exchange against *five* of the previous series of equal nominal value! In both issues the paper-money was, in official valuation, only equivalent to half its nominal value in

silver.' Kublai's successors followed his example, and the Ming dynasty improved on his system, as they made payments only in their notes but exacted hard cash from their people!"

"Modern governments have done the same thing," remarked the doctor. "I think it is in the knowledge of many here present that the Government of the United States has settled its obligations in currency and required duties at the custom-house to be paid in gold. Italy has done likewise, and so have Austria and Spain."

"From 1455 until the present century China had no government currency of paper," continued Fred. "In very recent times it has revived the practices of the thirteenth century, and with disastrous effects. Japan had a paper currency in the fourteenth century, and Persia and India tried the experiment about the same time. According to the histories there was a currency, not of paper but of stamped leather, issued by the emperor Frederic II., at the siege of Faenza in 1241, a few years before the birth of our hero. The curious thing about it is that it was all redeemed in solid gold.

"So much for Kublai Khan's banking system, which is worth reading very carefully. That Kublai was an excellent man of business is well shown by Marco's statement that all the merchants bringing gold, silver, pearls, and precious stones from other countries were prohibited from selling to any one but the emperor. Marco naively says that all this treasure cost him nothing, as he paid for it in paper of his own making. And what an excellent opportunity his twelve experts had to make a good living out of their situations!

"Unfortunately no specimens of Kublai's notes have come down to us, but some of the notes of the Ming dynasty which succeeded the Mongols are still in existence. I am about to propose an adjournment for the evening and after the meeting is over I will show you a picture of one of these notes, which was quite probably a good representation of some of the currency of the Great Kublai."

The meeting adjourned very promptly and Fred was as good as his promise. The note was carefully examined by all present, and justly regarded as a great curiosity. It was an oblong sheet so dark in color as to justify Marco's statement that it was black. Chinese characters were printed on the central portion of the note, and there were two seals in red, which were doubtless the official stamps to indicate the genuineness of the issue. A comparison of the sheet with a specimen of the work of the American Bank-Note Company which the doctor drew from his pocket was an excellent illustration of the progress that has been made in the art of printing money.

CHAPTER XIII.

Kublai's Form of Government—His Council of State—Posting System Established by the Great Khan—Coal Mines in China—Astrology and Religion.

"We will now have a glance at Kublai's system of government," said Frank at the opening of the next session of the Society. "His Council of State, consisting of twelve barons, seems to have been very much like the ministry of the modern governments of Europe, or the Cabinet of the President of the United States. Twelve seems to have been a favorite number with Oriental governments, as we find that the Khan of the Turks in the early centuries of the Christian era had a Council of Twelve Grandees who advised him relative to public affairs. The Imperial Council of Twelve was retained subsequent to Polo's time, but at present the number has been changed."

Having made this explanation, Frank opened the book and read:

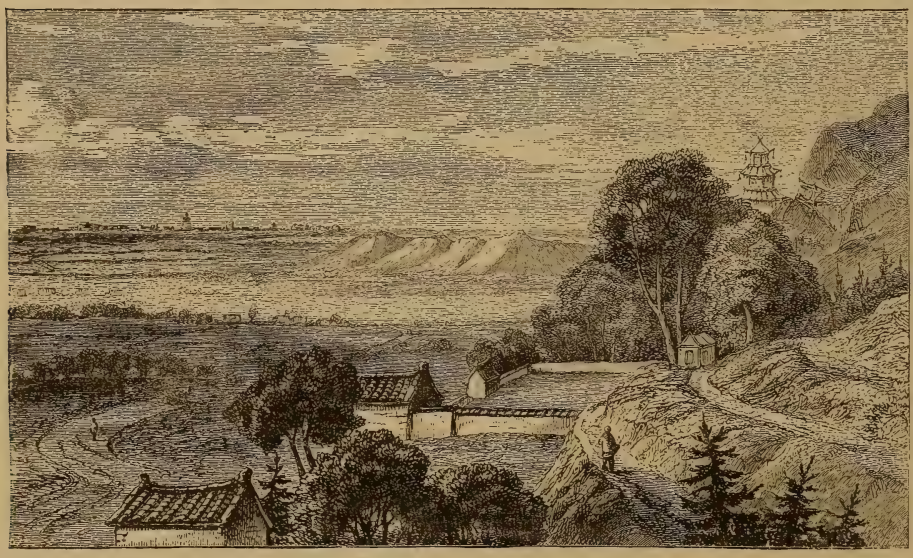
CONCERNING THE TWELVE BARONS WHO ARE SET OVER ALL THE AFFAIRS OF THE GREAT KAAN.

You must know that the Great Kaan hath chosen twelve great Barons to whom he hath committed all the necessary affairs of thirty-four great provinces; and now I will tell you particulars about them and their establishments.

You must know that these twelve Barons reside altogether in a very rich and handsome palace, which is inside the city of Cambaluc, and consists of a variety of edifices, with many suites of apartments. To every province is assigned a judge and several clerks, and all reside in this palace, where each has his separate quarters. These judges and clerks administer all the affairs of the provinces to which they are attached,

under the direction of the twelve Barons. Howbeit, when an affair is of very great importance, the twelve Barons lay it before the Emperor, and he decides as he thinks best. But the power of those twelve Barons is so great that they choose the governors for all those 34 great provinces that I have mentioned, and only after they have chosen do they inform the Emperor of their choice. This he confirms, and grants to the person nominated a tablet of gold such as is appropriate to the rank of his government.

Those twelve Barons also have such authority that they can dispose of the movements of the forces, and send them whither, and in such



Plain of Cambaluc ; the City in the Distance. From the Hills on the Northwest.

strength as, they please. This is done indeed with the Emperor's cognizance, but still the orders are issued on their authority. They are styled SHIENG, which is as much as to say "The Supreme Court," and the palace where they abide is also called *Shieng*. This body forms the highest authority at the Court of the Great Kaan ; and indeed they can favor and advance whom they will. I will not now name the 34 provinces to you, because they will be spoken of in detail in the course of this Book.

HOW THE KAAN'S POSTS AND RUNNERS ARE SPED THROUGH MANY LANDS AND PROVINCES.

Now you must know that from this city of Cambaluc proceed many roads and highways leading to a variety of provinces, one to one province, another to another; and each road receives the name of the province to which it leads; and it is a very sensible plan. And the messengers of the Emperor in travelling from Cambaluc, be the road whichsoever they will, find at every twenty-five miles of the journey a station which they call *Yamb*, or, as we should say, the "Horse-Post-House." And at each of those stations used by the messengers there is a large and handsome building for them to put up at, in which they find all the rooms furnished with fine beds and all other necessary articles in rich silk, and where they are provided with every thing they can want. If even a king were to arrive at one of these, he would find himself well lodged.

A Japanese Runner.

At some of these stations, moreover, there shall be posted some 400 horses standing ready for the use of the messengers; at others there shall be 200, according to the requirements, and to what the Emperor has established in each case. At every 25 miles, as I said, or anyhow at every 30 miles, you find one of these stations, on all the principal highways leading to the different provincial governments; and the same is the case throughout all the chief provinces subject to the Great Kaan. Even when the messengers have to pass through a roadless tract where neither house nor hostel exists, still there the station-houses have been established just the same, excepting that the intervals are somewhat greater, and the day's journey is fixed at 35 to 45 miles, instead of 25 to 30. But they are provided with horses and all the other necessaries just like those we have described, so that the Emperor's messengers, come they from what region they may, find every thing ready for them.

On all these posts taken together there are more than 300,000 horses kept up, specially for the use of the messengers. And the great buildings that I have mentioned are more than 10,000 in number, all richly furnished as I told you. The thing is on a scale so wonderful and costly that it is hard to bring one's self to describe it.

You must know that by the Great Kaan's orders there has been established between those post-houses, at every interval of three miles, a little fort with some forty houses round about it, in which dwell the people who act as the Emperor's foot-runners. Every one of those runners wears a great wide belt, set all over with bells, so that as they run the three miles from post to post their bells are heard jingling a long way off. And thus on reaching the post the runner finds another man similarly equipt, and all ready to take his place, who instantly takes over whatsoever he has in charge, and with it receives a slip of paper from the clerk who is always at hand for the purpose; and so the new man sets off and runs his three miles. At the next station he finds his relief ready in like manner; and so the post proceeds, with a change at every three miles. And in this way the Emperor, who has an immense number of these runners, receives despatches with news from places ten days' journey off in one day and night; or, if need be, news from a hundred days off in ten days and nights, and that is no small matter! In fact, in the fruit season many a time fruit shall be gathered one morning at Cambaluc, and the evening of the next day it shall reach the Great Kaan at Chandu, a distance of ten days' journey. The clerk at each of the posts notes the time of each courier's arrival and departure; and there are often other officers whose business it is to make monthly visitations of all the posts, and to punish those runners who have been slack in their work. The Emperor exempts these men from all tribute, and pays them besides.

Moreover, there are also at those stations other men equipt similarly with girdles hung with bells, who are employed for expresses when there is a call for great haste in sending despatches to any governor of a province, or to give news when any Baron has revolted, or in other such emergencies; and these men travel a good 200 or 250 miles in the day, and as much in the night. I 'll tell you how it stands. They take a horse from those at the station which are standing ready saddled, all fresh

and in wind, and mount and go at full speed, as hard as they can ride in fact. And when those at the next post hear the bells, they get ready another horse and a man equipt in the same way, and he takes over the letter or whatever it be, and is off full-speed to the third station, where again a fresh horse is found all ready, and so the despatch speeds along from post to post, always at full gallop with regular change of horses. And the speed at which they go is marvellous. By night, however, they cannot go so fast as by day, because they have to be accompanied by footmen with torches, who could not keep up with them at full speed.

Ready for the Road.

Those men are highly prized; and they could never do it did they not bind hard the stomach, chest, and head with strong bands. And each of them carries with him a gerfalcon tablet, in sign that he is bound on an urgent express; so that if perchance his horse break down, or he meet with other mishap, whomsoever he may fall in with on the road, he is empowered to make him dismount and give up his horse. Nobody dares refuse in such a case; so that the courier hath always a good fresh nag to carry him.

Now all these numbers of post-horses cost the Emperor nothing at all; and I will tell you the how and the why. Every city, or village, or ham-

let, that stands near one of those post-stations, has a fixed demand made on it for as many horses as it can supply, and these it must furnish to the post. And in this way are provided all the posts of the cities, as well as the towns and villages round about them; only in uninhabited tracts the horses are furnished at the expense of the Emperor himself.

Nor do the cities maintain the full number, say of 400 horses, always at their station, but month by month 200 shall be kept at the station, and the other 200 at grass, coming in their turn to relieve the first 200. And if there chance to be some river or lake to be passed by the runners and horse-posts, the neighboring cities are bound to keep three or four boats in constant readiness for the purpose.

And now I will tell you of the great bounty exercised by the Emperor towards his people twice a year.

HOW THE EMPEROR BESTOWS HELP ON HIS PEOPLE, WHEN THEY ARE AFFLICTED WITH DEARTH OR MURRAIN.

Now you must know that the Emperor sends his messengers over all his Lands and Kingdoms and Provinces, to ascertain from his officers if the people are afflicted by any dearth through unfavorable seasons, or storms, or locusts, or other like calamity; and from those who have suffered in this way no taxes are exacted for that year; nay more, he causes them to be supplied with corn of his own for food and seed. Now this is undoubtedly a great bounty on his part. And when winter comes, he causes inquiry to be made as to those who have lost their cattle, whether by murrain or other mishap, and such persons not only go scot free, but get presents of cattle. And thus, as I tell you, the Lord every year helps and fosters the people subject to him.

There is another trait of the Great Kaan I should tell you; and that is, that if a chance shot from his bow strike any herd or flock, whether belonging to one person or to many, and however big the flock may be, he takes no tithe thereof for three years. In like manner if the arrow strike a boat full of goods, that boat-load pays no duty; for it is thought unlucky that an arrow strike any one's property; and the Great Kaan says it would be an abomination before God, were such property, that has been struck by the divine wrath, to enter into his Treasury.

HOW THE GREAT KAAN CAUSES TREES TO BE PLANTED BY THE HIGHWAYS.

The Emperor moreover hath taken order that all the highways travelled by his messengers and the people generally should be planted with rows of great trees a few paces apart; and thus these trees are visible a long way off, and no one can miss the way by day or night. Even the roads through uninhabited tracts are thus planted, and it is the greatest possible solace to travellers. And this is done on all the ways where it

A Siberian Courier.

can be of service. The Great Kaan plants these trees all the more readily, because his astrologers and diviners tell him that he who plants trees lives long.

But where the ground is so sandy and desert that trees will not grow, he causes other landmarks, pillars or stones, to be set up to show the way.

"Here we have," said Fred, "an excellent description of the courier or posting system established by Kublai Khan, but we must not suppose it was his invention. Posts existed in China

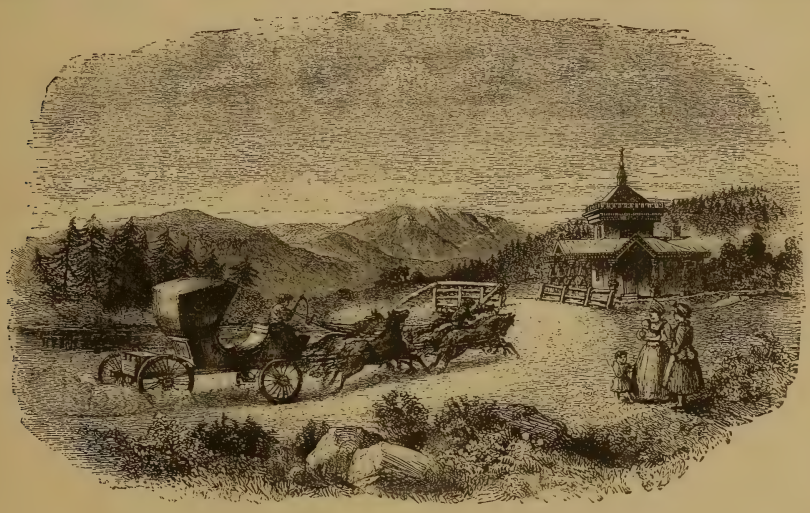
three centuries before his time; they were employed by the ancient Persian kings, and there were posts in India in the thirteenth century, though their existence was probably unknown to Polo. Undoubtedly Kublai improved greatly on the system as he found it, but we must make due allowance for Marco's statements as to the number of horses and runners kept at the stations and the magnificence with which the roadside establishments were furnished. Perhaps Dr. Allen will tell us something about Asiatic posting, as he found it in his journey through Siberia."

"There are many things about the Siberian system," said the doctor, "to indicate its Mongol origin. Marco says the stations established by Kublai were called *Yambs;* the name is retained for the Siberian stations, and the drivers are called *Yamshicks* or *Yemshicks.* The stations are from ten to twenty miles apart on the great road through Siberia, but on the side road the distances between the stations are greater. I travelled about five thousand miles by the Russian post-roads—thirty-six hundred in a sleigh and fourteen hundred in a wheeled carriage. I had never less than two horses to my conveyance and sometimes five or six; whatever the number they were always harnessed abreast—one horse between the shafts of the vehicle and the rest outside. The neck of the shaft-horse was surmounted with a high yoke to which one or more bells were attached to indicate that I was travelling on a government passport and ordinary vehicles must give me the road. I have already told you how the tea-caravans were obliged to turn out, and of the accident that happened on one occasion. You observe that the bells were in use on Kublai's post-routes just as they are now used in Siberia.

"At each station in Siberia the master is required to keep fourteen horses and six drivers, though the number varies according to the season of the year and the importance of the route. If the supply of horses runs out, he may require the people of the village to bring their horses whenever they are wanted by a traveller, and, at any rate, he can generally provide

all that are required on payment of a small extra price. The rate to be paid is fixed by the government, and at each station there is a framed placard which states the number of versts (the Russian measure of road-distances) to the two neighboring stations, so that the station-master cannot easily cheat the stranger. There is also an official book in which the traveller may write complaints of the service, and it is generally fastened to the table in the public room.

"I am afraid the comfort of the posting stations in Asia has greatly degenerated since Polo's time, if the story of our Vene-



Summer Travel in Siberia.

tian is anywhere near the truth. The stations on the great Siberian road are just fairly comfortable, and nothing more. There is a house in which the master lives with his family and his drivers, and one room of this house is set apart for the use of travellers. It usually contains nothing more than some benches and a table, with possibly a few rude chairs. It is warmed by the large stove that fills the centre of the house and affords heat to several rooms at once. No bedding is supplied, and if the traveller wishes to sleep there he must bring his blankets and furs from his vehicle and make a couch for himself on one of the

benches. A Siberian journey continues day and night till its end, and very few persons ever sleep at the stations. The rich beds and other things of fine silk that Marco mentions are unknown in Siberia, and the king who should seek lodgings at any of the post-stations I saw would not fall in love with his quarters. The traveller generally carries his own provisions, as he cannot rely on the stations for any thing else than bread and eggs, with hot water for making tea.

"For hundreds of miles through Eastern Russia the post-road is lined with trees after the manner mentioned by Polo, and in desert places the route is marked by mounds of stone or earth. Many of Kublai's tree-bordered roads still remain in Northern China.

"The foot-runners mentioned by Marco are unknown in Siberia, but are still in use in China, Japan, and other Eastern countries. They travel very fast, and will run incredible distances without halting to rest. A Japanese runner generally divests himself of the greater part of his clothing, and slings his parcel across his shoulder at the end of a stick. He has been known to run at the rate of seven miles an hour for several hours without serious injury, though he was naturally much fatigued at the end of his journey."

One of the youths in the audience asked if it was really true that these runners were employed to carry fruit for the king's table.

"Quite likely such was the case," answered the doctor. "Certainly runners have been so employed in other countries, and I have no doubt that they were similarly occupied with Kublai. The princes and kings of India, Burmah, and other Asiatic countries used to have supplies of fruits transported by swift runners, and some of the *daimios* or Japanese princes living far inland have live fish brought from the sea-coast daily for the supply of their tables. Once on one of the roads of Japan I met a man carrying two large vases slung at the ends of a pole, and each vase contained several fishes swimming in water.

"The most remarkable transportation of fruit that I know of is recorded of one of the caliphs of Cairo in the tenth century. He desired some cherries of Baalbek, and one of his ministers undertook to procure them. He caused six hundred carrier-pigeons to be sent to Baalbek, where they were let loose for their homeward flight. Each pigeon had a silken bag attached to his leg, and in each bag was a cherry.

"According to Polo," the doctor continued, "the couriers of Kublai were changed at each station, but in most Asiatic countries

Japanese Roadside Station. Mt. Fusiyama in Background.

at the present day they ride long distances. Express couriers in Thibet ride from Gartokh to Lassa, a distance of about eight hundred miles, and they travel day and night. The courier's coat is sealed upon him and he cannot remove it until he arrives at the end of his journey. The modern Turkish post between Constantinople and Bagdad is done by four Tartar couriers, each riding about three hundred miles, and going night and day till his journey is ended. The Pony Express across the centre of the Ameri-

can continent, before the completion of the railway, used to change horses every twenty-five miles and riders every seventy-five miles. The saddle with the letter-bags attached went through from the beginning to the end of the route.

"I have taken up a good deal of Fred's time," said the doctor in conclusion, "but hope I have not altogether wasted it." And with these words he resumed his seat.

Fred thanked the doctor for what he had told them concerning the posting systems of Asia, and said he had nothing to add. "But I will," said he, "anticipate the next chapter which Frank is about to read by saying that the wine he describes is still made in China, and from the same material, rice. The Chinese name for it is *sam-shoo*, and it is said to be a fiery liquid, very strong and 'heady.' One traveller says it seemed as if he had swallowed a torch-light procession when he took a glass of *sam-shoo*, and another was afraid he had burned a hole in his throat. It is served hot and in tiny cups about the size of a lady's thimble. The Chinese are fond of this liquid, but they rarely drink it except at their meals. Sometimes it is mixed with spices, and this seems to have been the case with what is described by Polo."

Fred having finished his dissertation upon *sam-shoo*, the narrative was resumed by Frank.

CONCERNING THE RICE-WINE DRUNK BY THE PEOPLE OF CATHAY.

Most of the people of Cathay drink wine, which they brew of rice with a quantity of excellent spice, in such fashion that it makes better drink than any other kind of wine; it is not only good, but clear and pleasing to the eye. And being very hot stuff, it makes one drunk sooner than any other wine.

CONCERNING THE BLACK STONES THAT ARE DUG IN CATHAY, AND ARE BURNT FOR FUEL.

It is a fact that all over the country of Cathay there is a kind of black stones existing in beds in the mountains, which they dig out and burn like firewood. If you supply the fire with them at night, and see that

they are well kindled, you will find them still alight in the morning; and they make such capital fuel that no other is used throughout the country. It is true that they have plenty of wood also, but they do not burn it, because those stones burn better and cost less.

Moreover with that vast number of people, and the number of hot-baths that they maintain—for every one has such a bath at least three times a week, and in winter if possible every day, whilst every nobleman and man of wealth has a private bath for his own use,—the wood would not suffice for the purpose.

HOW THE GREAT KAAN CAUSES STORES OF CORN TO BE MADE, TO HELP HIS PEOPLE WITHAL IN TIME OF DEARTH.

You must know that when the Emperor sees that the corn is cheap and abundant, he buys up large quantities, and has it stored in all his provinces and great granaries, where it is so well looked after that it will keep for three or four years.

Chinese Wine-Bottles.

And this applies, let me tell you, to all kinds of corn, whether wheat, barley, millet, rice, panic, or what not, and when there is any scarcity of a particular kind of corn he causes that to be issued. And if the price of the corn is at one bezant the measure, he lets them have it at a bezant for four measures, or at whatever price will produce general cheapness; and every one can have food in this way. And by this providence of the Emperor's, his people can never suffer from dearth. He does the same over his whole Empire; causing these supplies to be stored everywhere according to calculation of the wants and necessities of the people.

OF THE CHARITY OF THE EMPEROR TO THE POOR.

I have told you how the Great Kaan provides for the distribution of necessaries to his people in time of dearth, by making store in time of

cheapness. Now I will tell you of his alms and great charity to the poor of his city of Cambaluc.

You see he causes selection to be made of a number of families in the city which are in a state of indigence, and of such families some may consist of six in the house, some of eight, some of ten, more or fewer in each as it may hap, but the whole number being very great. And each family he causes annually to be supplied with wheat and other corn sufficient for the whole year. And this he never fails to do every year. Moreover, all those who choose to go to the daily dole at the Court receive a great loaf apiece hot from the baking, and nobody is denied; for so the Lord hath ordered. And so some 30,000 people go for it every day from year's end to year's end. Now this is a great goodness in the Emperor to take pity of his poor people thus! And they benefit so much by it that they worship him as he were God.

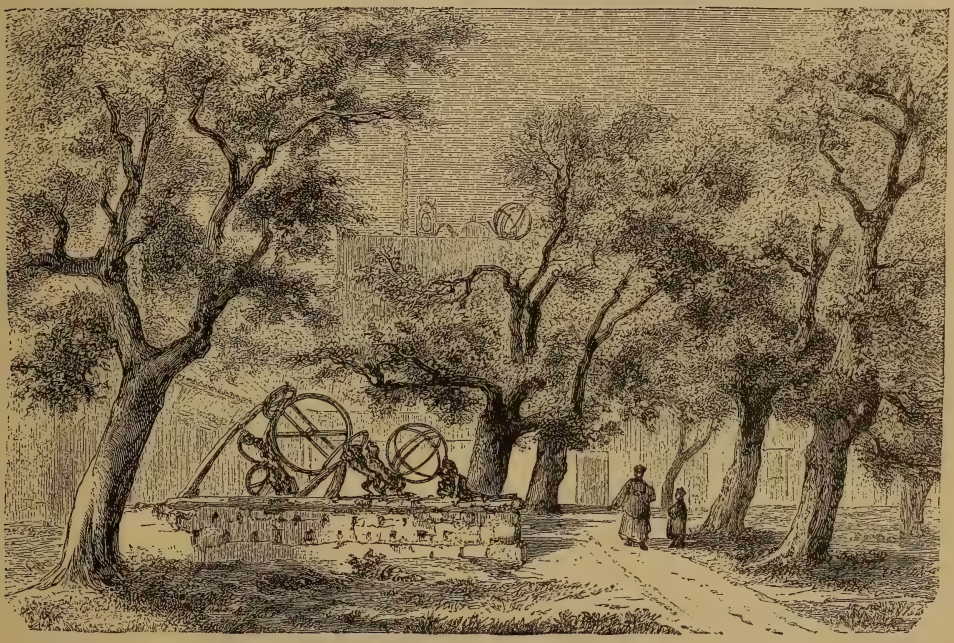
He also provides the poor with clothes. For he lays a tithe upon all wool, silk, hemp, and the like from which clothing can be made; and he has these woven and laid up in a building set apart for the purpose; and as all artizans are bound to give a day's labor weekly, in this way the Kaan has these stuffs made into clothing for those poor families, suitable for summer or winter according to the time of year. He also provides the clothing for his troops, and has woollens woven for them in every city, the material for which is furnished by the tithe aforesaid. You should know that the Tartars, before they were converted to the religion of the Idolaters, never practised almsgiving. Indeed when any poor man begged of them they would tell him: "Go with God's curse, for if He loved you as He loves me He would have provided for you!" But the sages of the Idolaters, and especially the *Bacsis* mentioned before, told the Great Kaan that it was a good work to provide for the poor, and that his idols would be greatly pleased if he did so. And since then he has taken to do for the poor so much as you have heard.

CONCERNING THE ASTROLOGERS IN THE CITY OF CAMBALUC.

There are in the city of Cambaluc, what with Christians, Saracens, and Cathayans, some 5000 astrologers and soothsayers, whom the Great Kaan

provides with annual maintenance and clothing, just as he provides the poor of whom we have spoken, and they are in the constant exercise of their art in this city.

They have a kind of Astrolabe on which are inscribed the planetary signs, the hours and critical points of the whole year. And every year these Christian, Saracen, and Cathayan astrologers, each sect apart, investigate by means of this astrolabe the course and character of the whole year, according to the indications of each of its Moons, in order to dis-



Court of Imperial Observatory, Peking. Astrolabe in the Foreground.

cover by the natural course and disposition of the planets, and the other circumstances of the heavens, what shall be the nature of the weather, and what peculiarities shall be produced by each Moon of the year; as for example, under which Moon there shall be thunderstorms and tempests, under which there shall be disease, murrain, wars, disorders, and treasons, and so on according to the indications of each; but always adding that it lies with God to do less or more according to his pleasure. And they write down the results of their examination in certain little

pamphlets for the year, which are called *Tacuin*, and these are sold for a groat to all who desire to know what is coming. Those of the astrologers, of course, whose predictions are found to be most exact, are held to be the greatest adepts in their art, and get the greater fame.

And if any one having some great matter in hand, or proposing to make a long journey for traffic or other business, desires to know what will be the upshot, he goes to one of these astrologers and says: "Turn up your books and see what is the present aspect of the heavens, for I am going away on such and such a business." Then the astrologer will reply that the applicant must also tell the year, month, and hour of his birth; and when he has got that information he will see how the horoscope of his nativity combines with the indications of the time when the question is put, and then he predicts the result, good or bad, according to the aspect of the heavens.

You must know, too, that the Tartars reckon their years by twelves; the sign of the first year being the Lion, of the second the Ox, of the third the Dragon, of the fourth the Dog, and so forth up to the twelfth, so that when one is asked the year of his birth he answers that it was in the year of the Lion (let us say) on such a day or night, at such an hour, and such a moment. And the father of a child always takes care to write these particulars down in a book. When the twelve yearly symbols have been gone through, then they come back to the first, and go through with them again in the same succession.

"It is very evident," said Fred, as Frank paused, "that the Chinese made use of mineral coal in Polo's time. There are excellent beds of coal in various parts of China, but it has never been mined on an extensive scale, owing to the lack of transportation facilities. Within the last few years the Chinese have been induced, through foreign influences, to develop their coal mines and they promise well for the future."

Dr. Allen said coal exists in every one of the eighteen provinces of China, and is extensively burned in the northern part of the empire. There is a mine at Yuen-min-Yuen, eight miles from Peking, and there are other deposits not far away. A

German scientist, who explored the coal fields of China, says that in the province of Shanzi alone there is sufficient coal for the entire consumption of the globe, at the present rate, for seven thousand years! He further declares that if a railway is ever built to these regions, it can run for miles through solid beds of anthracite!

"The custom," said Fred, "of storing grain in years of plenty, as a precaution against years of scanty crops, has been continued in China down to the present time, but not always with the good results described under Kublai's system. Some of the emperors have used these public stores as means of oppression, or allowed their officials to do so. In some districts a supply for two years is kept constantly on hand, and in case of a failure of

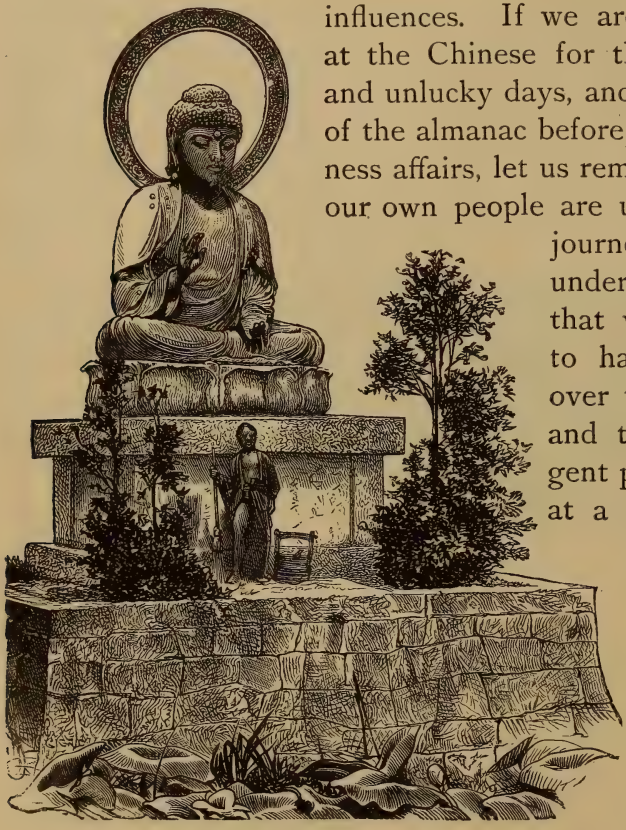
Harbor of Kelung, China, Where Coal Mines Are Operated.

the crops it is sold to the people at the ordinary price, or given to them with the agreement that it is to be returned in the first plentiful year.

"I have heard," continued the youth, "that a town in Northern Siberia has a similar regulation regarding fish. Salmon caught in the rivers are the only food of the people; if, as sometimes happens, the fish fail to come there is great suffering, and the inhabitants run the risk of starvation. To prevent such a calamity the governor established a storehouse of fish, and a supply for three years is constantly retained there. In seasons of dearth a man may draw from this storehouse, but he must repay his drafts in the first plentiful season.

"The next paragraph," he continued, "is an admirable commentary on the benevolence inculcated by Buddhism in contrast to the cruel precepts of the Moslems. Buddha was a teacher of charity, and his precepts survive in the religion he founded, though they are not always obeyed by his followers.

"We have already had a reference to the abundance of fortune-tellers in Chinese cities, and the general belief in magical influences. If we are inclined to laugh at the Chinese for their belief in lucky and unlucky days, and their consultations of the almanac before entering upon business affairs, let us remember that many of our own people are unwilling to begin a journey or other serious undertaking on Friday; that we generally prefer to have the new moon over the right shoulder; and thousands of intelligent persons refuse to sit at a dinner table where the party numbers thirteen.



Colossal Figure of Buddha.

"Astrologers are less numerous at Peking to-day than in Kublai's time, and they are not fed and clothed at government expense, but they are sufficiently abundant for all practical necessities. The government still issues an almanac in which the signs of the heavens and the list of lucky and unlucky days are presented with great elaboration. The lists are supposed to be made by the court astronomers upon careful calculations, but the

probabilities are that the compilers of the volume do not take much trouble with it.

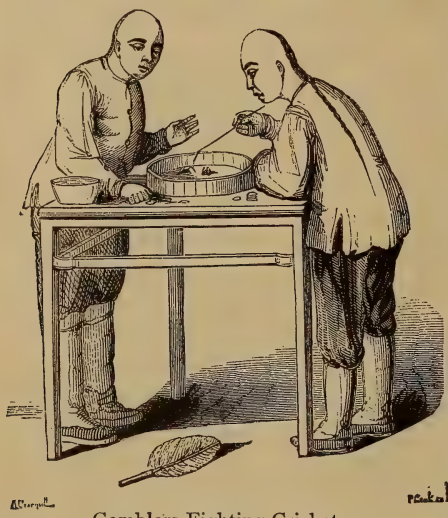
"With another chapter, describing some of the religious customs of the day, and a few remarks upon filial piety among the people, we shall close the exercises of this evening. You are all aware that the Chinese continue to worship idols and tablets as they did centuries ago; it would require far more time than I have at my disposal to make a satisfactory explanation of their religious belief, and I must refer you to some of the books which treat in detail of the subject. Doolittle's 'Social life of the Chinese' and Williams' 'Middle Kingdom' are specially recommended for your perusal, and you can also obtain considerable information from any good encyclopedia.

"The ornate speech of the people described by Polo continues to-day. A Chinese gentlemen never says 'I' or 'you,' but calls himself 'the inferior,' 'the disciple,' 'the little person,' or possibly 'the worm' or 'the insect.' He addresses the party to whom he speaks as 'the master,' or 'the learned man,' or may even call him 'mandarin,' or 'great chief.' A passage of politeness among Chinese is amusing to an Occidental, as the speaker applies debasing terms to himself and exalting ones to the listener.

"Filial piety is part of the Chinese teaching from one end of the empire to the other. Love of parents prevails everywhere, and a man accused of ingratitude to his father or mother is deemed guilty of a very serious offence. If a son is accused before a magistrate the latter must and will order the punishment of the offender, and if the offence and accusation are repeated the punishment is death.

"You will observe that Marco says the Khan forbabe gambling on the part of his subjects. It is a pity the present Emperor of China does not issue a similar edict and enforce it too. The Chinese are great gamblers, and they carry the practice into ordinary life. In the streets it is not unusual to see a man gamble away his dinner and go without eating any thing on the

mere chance of obtaining the dinner of another for nothing. They have a great variety of games, at which they risk their money, their clothing, and sometimes their wives and children, who are thus sold into slavery. One of their modes of gambling is to put a couple of beetles into a shallow dish, and set them to fighting, very much as men in America and England get up fights between dogs or other animals. They become greatly excited over the combat, and I am told that thousands of dollars have been won and lost over a battle between two of these insects.



Gamblers Fighting Crickets.

"And now," said Fred in concluding, "I will ask Frank to read the chapter in question, and will move that we adjourn as soon as he has finished it."

It was voted that when Frank had ended his part of the work the meeting would stand adjourned. With this understanding the young gentleman read as follows:

CONCERNING THE RELIGION OF THE CATHAYANS; THEIR VIEWS AS TO THE SOUL; AND THEIR CUSTOMS.

As we have said before, these people are Idolaters, and as regards their gods, each has a tablet fixed high up on the wall of his chamber, on which is inscribed a name which represents the Most High and Heavenly God; and before this they pay daily worship, offering incense from a thurible, raising their hands aloft, and gnashing their teeth three times, praying Him to grant them health of mind and body; but of him they ask nought else. And below on the ground there is a figure which they call *Natigai*, which is the god of things terrestrial. To him they give a wife and children, and they worship him in the same manner, with incense, and gnashing of teeth, and lifting up of hands; and of him they

ask seasonable weather, and the fruits of the earth, children, and so forth.

Their view of the immortality of the soul is after this fashion. They believe that as soon as a man dies, his soul enters into another body,

Buddhist Monks at the Door of a Monastery.

going from a good to a better, or from a bad to a worse, according as he hath conducted himself well or ill. That is to say, a poor man, if he have passed through life good and sober, shall be born again of a gentle-

woman and shall be a gentleman; and on a second occasion shall be born of a princess and shall be a prince; and so on, always rising, till he be absorbed into the Deity. But if he have borne himself ill, he who was the son of a gentleman shall be reborn as the son of a boor, and from a boor shall become a dog, always going down lower and lower.

The people have an ornate style of speech; they salute each other with a cheerful countenance, and with great politeness; they behave like gentlemen, and eat with great propriety. They show great respect to their parents; and should there be any son who offends his parents, or fails to minister to their necessities, there is a public office which has no other charge but that of punishing unnatural children, who are proved to have acted with ingratitude towards their parents.

Criminals of sundry kinds who have been imprisoned, are released at a time fixed by the Great Kaan (which occurs every three years), but on leaving prison they are branded on one cheek that they may be recognized.

The Great Kaan hath prohibited all gambling and sharping, things more prevalent there than in any other part of the world. In doing this, he said: "I have conquered you by force of arms, and all that you have is mine; if, therefore, you gamble away your property, it is in fact my property that you are gambling away." Not that he took any thing from them however.

I must not omit to tell you of the orderly way in which the Kaan's Barons and others conduct themselves in coming to his presence. In the first place, within a half mile of the place where he is, out of reverence for his exalted majesty, everybody preserves a mien of the greatest meekness and quiet, so that no noise of shrill voices or loud talk shall be heard. And they all have certain handsome buskins of white leather, which they carry with them, and, when summoned by the sovereign, on arriving at the entrance to the hall, they put on these white buskins, and give their others in charge to the servants, in order that they may not injure the fine carpets of silk and gold and divers colors.

CHAPTER XIV.

Departure from Cambaluc—Journey Through Cathay—Shansi, Szechwan, and Thibet—Interesting Descriptions of Strange People—Salt as a Circulating Medium—Thibetan Prayer-Mills.

At the opening of the next session of the Society Frank announced that they were about to leave the capital of the Great Khan and visit other cities. "We will continue," said he, "the plan we have thus far followed. I will read the text of the book and make whatever abridgments are considered advisable, while Fred will offer comments and explanations, with the assistance of Dr. Allen and other friends, who will kindly come to our relief when we are perplexed."

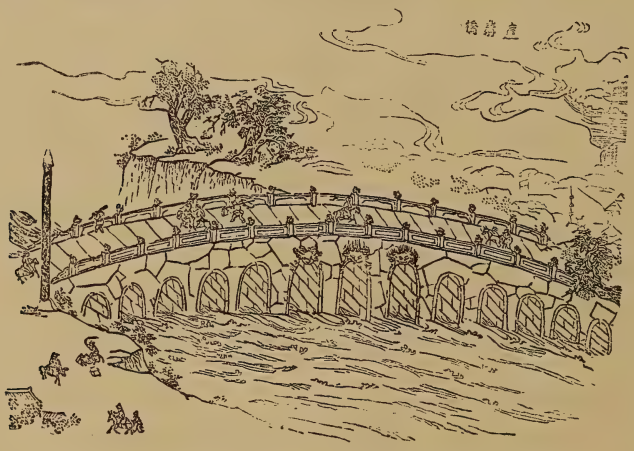
His remarks were received with the usual applause. When it subsided he proceeded to read from the book.

HERE BEGINS THE DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERIOR OF CATHAY; AND FIRST OF THE RIVER PULISANGHIN.

Now you must know that the Emperor sent the aforesaid Messer Marco Polo, who is the author of this whole story, on business of his into the Western Provinces. On that occasion he travelled from Cambaluc a good four months' journey toward the west. And so now I will tell you all that he saw on his travels as he went and returned.

When you leave the City of Cambaluc and have ridden ten miles, you come to a very large river which is called PULISANGHIN, and flows into the ocean, so that merchants with their merchandise ascend it from the sea. Over this River there is a very fine stone bridge, so fine indeed that it has very few equals. The fashion of it is this: it is 300 paces in length, and it must have a good eight paces of width, for ten mounted men can ride across it abreast. It has 24 arches and as many water-mills, and 't is all of very fine marble, well built and firmly founded. Along the top of the bridge there is on either side a parapet of marble slabs and

columns, made in this way. At the beginning of the bridge there is a marble column, and under it a marble lion, so that the column stands upon the lion's loins, whilst on the top of the column there is a second marble lion, both being of great size and beautifully executed sculpture. At the distance of a pace from this column there is another precisely the same, also with its two lions, and the space between them is closed with slabs of gray marble to prevent people from falling over into the water. And thus the columns run from space to space along either side of the bridge, so that altogether it is a beautiful object.



The Bridge of Pulisanghin. (From a Chinese Drawing.)

ACCOUNT OF THE CITY OF JUJU.

When you leave the Bridge, and ride toward the west, finding all the way excellent hostelries for travellers, with fine vineyards, fields, and gardens, and springs of water, you come after 30 miles to a fine large city called JUJU, where there are many abbeys of Idolaters, and the people live by trade and manufactures. They weave cloths of silk and gold, and very fine taffetas. Here too there are many hostelries for travellers.

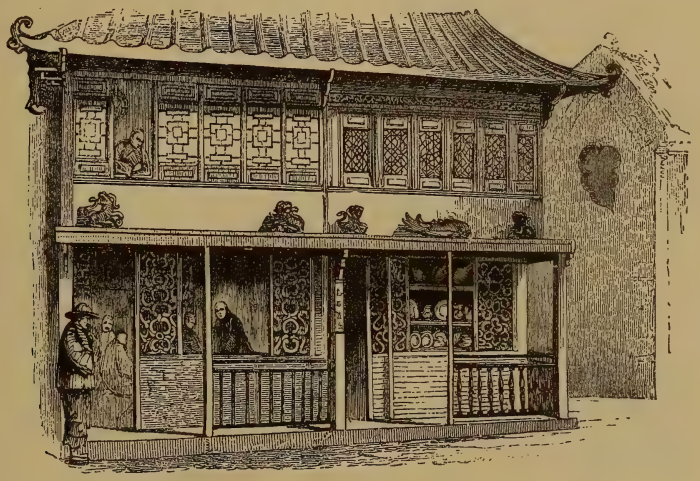
After riding a mile beyond this city you find two roads, one of which goes west and the other southeast. The westerly road is that through Cathay, and the southeasterly one goes toward the province of Manzi.

Taking the westerly one through Cathay, and travelling by it for ten days, you will find a constant succession of cities and boroughs, with

numerous thriving villages, all abounding with trade and manufactures, besides the fine fields and vineyards and dwellings of civilized people; but nothing occurs worthy of special mention.

THE KINGDOM OF TAIANFU.

After riding those ten days from the city of Juju, you find yourself in a kingdom called TAIANFU, and the city at which you arrive, which is the capital, is also called Taianfu, a very great and fine city. But at the end of five days' journey out of those ten, they say there is a city unusu-



Shop in a Chinese City.

ally large and handsome called ACBALUC, whereat terminate in this direction the hunting preserves of the Emperor, within which no one dares to sport except the Emperor and his family, and those who are on the books of the Grand Falconer. Beyond this limit any one is at liberty to sport, if he be a gentleman. The Great Kaan, however, scarcely ever went hunting in this direction, and hence the game, particularly the hares, had increased and multiplied to such an extent that all the crops of the Province were destroyed. The Great Kaan being informed of this, proceeded thither with all his Court, and the game that was taken was past counting.

Taianfu is a place of great trade and great industry, for here they

manufacture a large quantity of the most necessary equipments for the army of the Emperor. There grow here many excellent vines, supplying great plenty of wine; and in all Cathay this is the only place where wine is produced. It is carried hence all over the country. There is also a great deal of silk here, for the people have great quantities of mulberry-trees and silk-worms.

From this city of Taianfu you ride westward again for seven days, through fine districts with plenty of towns and boroughs, all enjoying much trade and practising various kinds of industry. Out of these districts go forth not a few great merchants, who travel to India and other foreign regions, buying and selling and getting gain. After those seven days' journey you arrive at a city called PIANFU, a large and important place, with a number of traders living by commerce and industry. It is a place, too, where silk is largely produced.

So we will leave it and tell you of a great city called Cachanfu. But stay—first let us tell you about the noble castle called Caichu.

"It appears," said Fred, "that Marco made a mistake in the name of the river with the fine bridge across it. *Pul-i-Sangin* means in Persian 'The Stone Bridge,' and the name appears repeatedly in Persian history for bridges in other localities. There are several stone bridges not far from Peking, all very old, and the commentators are in doubt as to the identity of the one named by Polo. None of these bridges have more than thirteen arches, but there is one farther to the west with twenty-four arches, which is the one he doubtless intended. He probably confounded two bridges, as there is one with lions' heads and columns just as he describes, but with thirteen arches instead of twenty-four.

"He is correct as to the distance from the city to the bridge, and also from the bridge to Juju, the modern Cho-Chau. It is still a place of considerable trade, and the river which flows through the town is crowded with boats. A modern traveller who followed the road described by Polo, in approaching Cho-Chau, says the drive was a beautiful one, and not only were the villages almost hidden by foliage but the road itself was lined

with trees. The effect was to make the journey seem like a ramble through the avenues of an English park.

"The roads diverge exactly as he tells us and lead in the directions indicated. When he speaks of the kingdom of Taianfu he undoubtedly means the province of Shansi, and by Taianfu (city) he means Taiyuan-Fu, the capital of Shansi. He uses kingdom and province rather loosely, though possibly the error is due to some of his translators. The city stands about three thousand feet above the sea, and was formerly the residence of

Foot-Bridge over a Chinese Canal.

the princes of the Ming dynasty; it contains an imperial factory for the manufacture of arms, and is noted for its hardware and cutlery. The half-way city described as Acbaluc is supposed to be Chingting-Fu, which has greatly declined in the past five centuries and is now of little importance.

"It is strange that Polo makes no mention of the mountains that lie between Chingting-Fu and the province of Shansi. There is a high range to be crossed, and then the road follows a series of narrow defiles to reach the Shansi table-lands. The country

is as famous for grapes now as in Polo's day, and also for other products. Pianfu is probably Pingyang-Fu, but we are in doubt concerning the identity of Caichu which Frank will now read about."

CONCERNING THE CASTLE OF CAICHU.

On leaving Pianfu you ride two days westward, and come to the noble castle of CAICHU, which was built in time past by a king of that country, whom they used to call the GOLDEN KING, and who had there a great and beautiful palace. There is a great hall of this palace, in which are pourtrayed all the ancient kings of the country, done in gold and other beautiful colors, and a very fine sight they make. Each king in succession as he reigned added to those pictures.

This Golden King was a great and potent Prince, and during his stay at this place there used to be in his service none but beautiful girls, of whom he had a great number in his Court. When he went to take the air about the fortress, these girls used to draw him about in a little carriage which they could easily move, and they would also be in attendance on the King instead of other servants.

Now I will tell you a pretty passage that befel between this Golden King and Prester John, as it was related by the people of the Castle.

It came to pass, as they told the tale, that this Golden King was at war with Prester John. And the King held a position so strong that Prester John was not able to get at him or to do him any scathe; wherefore he was in great wrath. So seventeen gallants belonging to Prester John's Court came to him in a body, and said that, an he would, they were ready to bring him the Golden King alive. His answer was, that he desired nothing better, and would be much bounden to them if they would do so.

So when they had taken leave of their Lord and Master Prester John, they set off together, this goodly company of gallants, and went to the Golden King, and presented themselves before him, saying that they had come from foreign parts to enter his service. And he answered by telling them that they were right welcome, and that he was glad to have their service, never imagining that they had any ill intent. And

so these mischievous squires took service with the Golden King; and served him so well that he grew to love them dearly.

And when they had abode with that King nearly two years, conducting themselves like persons who thought of any thing but treason, they one day accompanied the King on a pleasure party when he had very few else along with him: for in those gallants the King had perfect trust, and thus kept them immediately about his person. So after they had crossed a certain river that is about a mile from the castle, and saw that they were alone with the King, they said one to another that now was the time to achieve that they had come for. Then they all drew their swords and told the King that he must go with them and make no resistance, or they would slay him. The King at this was in alarm and great astonishment, and said: "How then, good my sons, what thing is this ye say? and whither would ye have me go?" They answered, and said: "You shall come with us, will ye nill ye, to Prester John our Lord."

Portrait of the Golden King.

HOW PRESTER JOHN TREATED THE GOLDEN KING HIS PRISONER.

And on this the Golden King was so sorely grieved that he was like to die. And he said to them: "Good my sons, have pity and compassion upon me. Ye wot well what honorable and kindly entertainment ye have had in my house; and now ye would deliver me into the hands of mine enemy! In sooth, if ye do what ye say, ye will do a very naughty and disloyal deed, and a right villainous." But they answered only that so it must be, and away they had him to Prester John their Lord.

And when Prester John beheld the King he was right glad, and greeted him with something like a malison. The King answered not a word, as if he wist not what it behoved him to say. So Prester John ordered him to be taken forth straightway, and to be put to look after cattle, but to be well looked after himself also. So they took

him and set him to keep cattle. This did Prester John of the grudge he bore the King, to heap contumely on him, and to show what a nothing he was, compared to himself.

And when the King had thus kept cattle for two years, Prester John sent for him, and treated him with honor, and clothed him in rich robes, and said to him: "Now, Sir King, art thou satisfied that thou wast in no way a man to stand against me?" "Truly, my good Lord, I know well and always did know that I was in no way a man to stand against thee." And when he had said this Prester John replied: "I ask no more; but henceforth thou shall be waited on and honorably treated." So he caused horses and harness of war to be given him, with a goodly train, and sent him back to his own country. And after that he remained ever friendly to Prester John, and held fast by him.

So now I will say no more of this adventure of the Golden King, but I will proceed with our subject.

CONCERNING THE GREAT RIVER CARAMORAN AND THE CITY OF CACHANFU.

When you leave the castle, and travel about twenty miles westward, you come to a river called CARAMORAN, so big that no bridge can be thrown across it; for it is of immense width and depth, and reaches to the Great Ocean that encircles the Universe,—I mean the whole earth. On this river there are many cities and walled towns, and many merchants too therein, for much traffic takes place upon the river, there being a great deal of ginger and a great deal of silk produced in the country.

Game birds here are in wonderful abundance, insomuch that you may buy at least three pheasants for a Venice groat of silver. I should say rather for an *asper*, which is worth a little more.

On the lands adjoining this river there grow vast quantities of great canes, some of which are a foot or a foot and a half in girth, and these the natives employ for many useful purposes.

After passing the river and travelling two days westward you come to the noble city of CACHANFU, which we have already named. The inhabitants are all Idolaters. And I may as well remind you again that all

the people of Cathay are Idolaters. It is a city of great trade and of work in gold tissues of many sorts, as well as other kinds of industry.

There is nothing else worth mentioning, and so we will proceed and tell you of a noble city which is the capital of a kingdom, and is called Kenjanfu.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF KENJANFU.

And when you leave the city of Cachanfu of which I have spoken, and travel eight days westward, you meet with cities and boroughs abounding in trade and industry, and quantities of beautiful trees, and gardens, and fine plains planted with mulberries, which are the trees on the leaves of which the silk-worms do feed. There is also plenty of game of all sorts, both of beasts and birds.

Scene on the Hoang-Ho.

And when you have travelled those eight days' journey, you come to that great city which I mentioned, called KENJANFU, which in old times was a noble, rich, and powerful realm, and had many great and wealthy and puissant kings. But now the king thereof is a prince called MANGALAI, the son of the Great Kaan, who hath given him this realm, and crowned him king thereof. It is a city of great trade and industry. They have great abundance of silk, from which they weave cloths of silk, and gold of divers kinds, and they also manufacture all sorts of equip-

ments for an army. They have every necessary of man's life very cheap. The city lies towards the west; and outside the city is the palace of the Prince Mangalai, crowned king, and son of the Great Kaan, as I told you before.

This is a fine palace and a great, as I will tell you. It stands in a great plain abounding in lakes and streams and springs of water. Round about it is a massive and lofty wall, five miles in compass, well built, and all garnished with battlements. And within this wall is the king's palace, so great and fine that no one could imagine a finer. There are in it many great and splendid halls, and many chambers, all painted and embellished with work in beaten gold. This Mangalai rules his realm right and well with justice and equity, and is much beloved by his people. The troops are quartered round about the palace, and enjoy the sport that the royal demesne affords.

So now let us quit this kingdom, and I will tell you of a very mountainous province called Cuncun, which you reach by a road right wearisome to travel.

"The story about the Golden King and Prester John is not a bad one," said Fred, "but there is no historical authority for it. We are also in doubt as to the identity of the king, but he was probably one of the kings of the so-called Golden Dynasty. *Roi d'Or*, or Golden King, is a literal translation of *Altun Khan*, the name of one of these rulers."

"How about his being drawn by girls in a carriage?" asked one of the young ladies in the audience.

"Quite possibly it was the case," said Fred in reply, "as we read that several of the later sovereigns of China had none but feminine attendants. The Taiping sovereign at Nanking adopted the same custom, and was drawn to his audience-chamber by the ladies of the court in a gilded car emblazoned with dragons. Perhaps this car was the original of the Japanese *jin-riki-sha*, or man-power carriage.

"The river called Caramoran, which Marco mentions after his account of the Golden King, was the Hoang-Ho, or Yellow

River, of China. In the Mongol language *Kara-Muren* means 'Black River,' and it was applied by them to the stream in question. Marco probably exaggerates the amount of traffic on the river, as the part he refers to is full of rapids and not easy of navigation. But there are many places where boats can be used, and it may be that these were the portions that he saw. In later times the river has altered its course, and the climate of Shansi appears to have changed. There is little silk grown there at

A Japanese Jinrikisha.

present, and the commerce of the country has declined greatly from its former proportions.

"Kenjanfu stands for Singanfu, the present capital of Shansi, and of great importance historically. It was the metropolis of the first emperor, and for many years was the capital of the country. In the seventh century it contained several Christian churches, whose existence had been almost forgotten until a stone was discovered by some workmen digging in the suburbs of Singanfu in the year 1625.

"It was a slab about seven feet long by three in width, covered

with an inscription in Chinese characters, surmounted with a cross. The inscription contained an abstract of Christian doctrine, the account of the arrival of a missionary with books and images, the translation of the books, the emperor's approval of the new doctrines, and his order for the erection of a church in the principal square of the city. Then follows a history of the progress of Christianity in the city, and the obstacles it had encountered. The stone has been carefully preserved, and here is a picture of the cross as it appears on the slab."

Several minutes were spent in examining the drawing, and then Fred went on with his comments. He explained that there was a large park to the west of the city which answered to Polo's account. It is beautifully laid out, and formerly contained several palaces, theatres, and other public buildings. There was also an artificial lake, and there were numerous canals and water-courses through the park, so that it could be traversed in all directions by boats.

Cross on Stone Found at Singanfu. (Reduced.)

Fred paused and gave an opportunity for Frank to carry the audience further along through the strange country they were visiting.

CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF CUNCUN, WHICH IS RIGHT WEARISOME TO TRAVEL THROUGH.

On leaving the Palace of Mangalai, you travel westward for three days, finding a succession of cities and boroughs and beautiful plains, inhabited by people who live by trade and industry and have great plenty of silk. At the end of those three days you reach the great mountains

and valleys which belong to the province of CUNCUN. There are towns and villages in the land, and the people live by tilling the earth, and by hunting in the great woods; for the region abounds in forests wherein are many wild beasts, such as lions, bears, lynxes, bucks, and roes, and sundry other kinds, so that many are taken by the people of the country who make a great profit thereof. So this way you travel over mountains and valleys, finding a succession of towns and villages, and many great hostelries for the entertainment of travellers, interspersed among extensive forests.

CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF ACBALEC MANZI.

After you have travelled those twenty days through the mountains of Cuncun that I have mentioned, then you come to a province called ACBALEC MANZI, which is all level country, with plenty of towns and villages, and belongs to the Great Kaan. The people are Idolaters, and live by trade and industry. I may tell you that in this province there grows such a great quantity of ginger, that it is carried all over the region of Cathay, and it affords a maintenance to all the people of the province, who get great gain thereby. They have also wheat and rice, and other kinds of corn in great plenty and cheapness; in fact the country abounds in all useful products. The capital city is called Acbalec Manzi, which signifies "The White City of the Manzi Frontier."

This plain extends for two days' journey, throughout which it is as fine as I have told you, with towns and villages as numerous. After those two days you again come to great mountains and valleys, and extensive forests, and you continue to travel westward through this kind of country for twenty days, finding, however, numerous towns and villages. The people are Idolaters, and live by agriculture, by cattle-keeping, and by the chase, for there is much game. And among other kinds, there are animals that produce the musk in great numbers.

CONCERNING THE PROVINCE AND CITY OF SINDAFU.

When you have travelled those 20 days westward through the mountains, as I have told you, then you arrive at a plain belonging to a province called Sindafu, which still is on the confines of Manzi, and the capital city of which is also called SINDAFU. This city was in former

days a rich and noble one, and the Kings who reigned there were very great and wealthy. It is a good twenty miles in compass, but it is divided in the way that I shall tell you.

You see the King of this Province, in the days of old, when he found himself drawing near to death, leaving three sons behind him, commanded that the city should be divided into three parts, and that each of his three sons should have one. So each of these three parts is separately walled about, though all three are surrounded by the common wall of the city. Each of the three sons was King, having his own part of the city, and his own share of the kingdom, and each of them in fact was a great and wealthy King. But the Great Kaan conquered the kingdom of these three Kings, and stripped them of their inheritance.

Through the midst of this great city runs a large river, in which they catch a great quantity of fish. It is a good half mile wide, and very deep withal, and so long that it reaches all the way to the Ocean Sea—a very long way, equal to 80 or 100 days' journey. And the name of the River is KIAN-SUY. The multitude of vessels that navigate this river is so vast, that no one who should read or hear the tale would believe it. The quantities of merchandize also which merchants carry up and down this river are past all belief. In fact, it is so big, that it seems to be a Sea rather than a River.

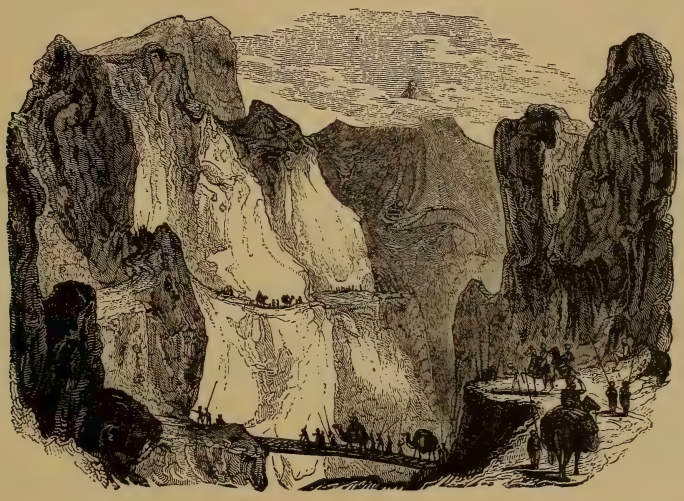
Let us now speak of a great Bridge which crosses this River within the city. This bridge is of stone; it is seven paces in width and half a mile in length (the river being that much in width as I told you); and all along its length on either side there are colums of marble to bear the roof, for the bridge is roofed over from end to end with timber, and that all richly painted. And on this bridge there are houses in which a great deal of trade and industry is carried on. But these houses are all of wood merely, and they are put up in the morning and taken down in the evening. Also there stands upon the bridge the Great Kaan's *Comercque*, that is to say, his custom-house, where his toll and tax are levied. And I can tell you that the dues taken on this bridge bring to the Kaan a thousand pieces of fine gold every day and more. The people are all Idolaters.

When you leave this city you travel for five days across a country of

plains and valleys, finding plenty of villages and hamlets, and the people of which live by husbandry. There are numbers of wild beasts, lions, and bears, and such like.

I should have mentioned that the people of Sindu itself live by manufactures, for they make fine sendals and other stuffs.

After travelling those five days' march, you reach a province called Tebet, which has been sadly laid waste; we will now say something of it.



Perilous Road Through a Rocky Defile.

"By Cuncun it is probable that Marco means the southern part of Shansi, which is called Hanchung. The country is rough and was formerly heavily wooded; in ancient times travellers were obliged to make a long detour on account of the mountains, but about the third century of our era a road was made across the range for military purposes. It is still in use and is regarded as a fine piece of engineering. The solid rock was removed from the face of precipitous cliffs and ledges, and in many places the track was supported by poles. When these poles rotted they had to be replaced or the route was impassable; sometimes it was neglected for many years at a time, and the longer it was left in this conditiion the greater was the work for those who repaired it.

"Following Polo's route through the mountains we come to Sindafu, province and city; the province is Szechwan and the city is Chingtufu. A modern visitor says of the latter:

"'My notice all goes to corroborate Marco Polo. The covered bridge with the stalls is still there, the only difference being the absence of the toll-house. I did not see any traces of a tripartite division of the city, nor did I make any inquiries on the subject during the three or four days I spent there, as it was not an object with me at the time to verify Polo's account. The city is indeed divided, but the division dates more than a thousand years back.'

"Another visitor says that Chingtufu is one of the finest and most advanced of the cities of China. He says its population is about 800,000, and the walls form a square about three miles each way, and there are suburbs besides. The streets are broad and straight, laid out at right angles, with a pavement of square flags very perfectly laid, slightly convex and drained at each side. The numerous commemorative arches are sculptured with skill; there is much display of artistic taste; and the people are remarkably civil to foreigners. This characterizes the whole province; and an air of wealth and refinement prevails even in the rural districts. The plain round Chingtufu is about ninety miles in length (S. E. to N. W.), by forty miles in width, with a copious irrigation and great fertility, so that in wealth and population it stands almost unrivalled.

"The story of the three sons of the king is not in the Chinese histories, and we may set it down with the Scotch verdict of 'Not proven.' In the mountains beyond the city there is a curious people called the Man-tzu, and it is to them Marco probably refers when he speaks of the Manzi. Captain Gill, a recent visitor to that country, says the French missionaries at Chingtufu advised him to eat nothing while with the Man-tzu except the provisions he carried with him. 'They have a belief,' said the missionaries, 'that if they poison a rich man his wealth will accrue to the poisoner. Therefore it is their custom to administer a

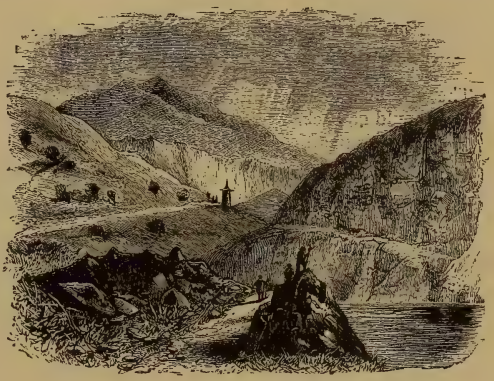
fatal drug to rich or noble guests; it does not take effect immediately, but develops a disease that ends in certain death in two or three months.'

"Near the city there are extensive brine wells whence the material for making salt is obtained. About one hundred thousand tons of salt are made there every year.

"We will now take a step in the direction of Thibet," said Fred, "and listen to Marco's account of it."

CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF TEBET.

After those five days' march that I spoke of, you enter a province which has been sorely ravaged; and this was done in the wars of Mongu Kaan. There are indeed towns and villages and hamlets, but all harried and destroyed.



View in the Man-tzu Country.

In this region you find quantities of canes, full three palms in girth and fifteen paces in length, with some three palms' interval between the joints. And let me tell you that merchants and other travellers through that country are wont at nightfall to gather these canes and make fires of them; for as they burn they make such loud reports that the lions and bears and other wild beasts are greatly frightened, and make off as fast as possible; in fact nothing will induce them to come nigh a fire of that sort. So you see the travellers make those fires to protect themselves and their cattle from the wild beasts which have so greatly multiplied since the devastation of the country. And 't is this great multiplication of the wild beasts that prevents the country from being reoccupied. In fact, but for the help of these canes, which make such a noise in burning that the beasts are terrified and kept at a distance, no one would be able even to travel through the land.

I will tell you how it is that the canes make such a noise. The people

cut the green canes, of which there are vast numbers, and set fire to a heap of them at once. After they have been awhile burning they burst asunder, and this makes such a loud report that you might hear it ten miles off. In fact, any one unused to this noise, who should hear it unexpectedly, might easily go into a swound or die of fright. But those who are used to it care nothing about it. Hence those who are not used to it stuff their ears well with cotton, and wrap up their heads and faces with all the clothes they can muster; and so they get along until they have become used to the sound. 'T is just the same with horses. Those which are unused to these noises are so alarmed by them that they break away from their halters and heel-ropes, and many a man has lost his beasts in this way. So those who would avoid losing their horses take care to tie all four legs and peg the ropes down strongly, and to wrap the heads and eyes and ears of the animals closely, and so they save them. But horses also, when they have heard the noise several times, cease to mind it. I tell you the truth, however, when I say that the first time you hear it nothing can be more alarming. And yet, in spite of all, the lions and bears and other wild beasts will sometimes come and do much mischief; for their numbers are great in those tracts.

You ride for 20 days without finding any inhabited spot, so that travellers are obliged to carry all their provisions with them, and are constantly falling in with those wild beasts which are so numerous and so dangerous. After that you come at length to a tract where there are towns and villages in considerable numbers.

The people are Idolaters and an evil generation, holding it no sin to rob and maltreat; in fact, they are the greatest brigands on earth. They live by the chase, as well as on their cattle and the fruits of the earth.

I should tell you also that in this country there are many of the animals that produce musk, which are called in the Tartar language *Gudderi*. Those rascals have great numbers of large and fine dogs, which are of great service in catching the musk-beasts, and so they procure great abundance of musk. They have none of the Great Kaan's paper-money, but use salt instead of money. They are very poorly clad, for their clothes are only of the skins of beasts, and of canvas, and of buckram. They have a language of their own, and they are called Tebet. And

this country of TEBET forms a very great province, of which I will give you a brief account.

FURTHER DISCOURSE CONCERNING TEBET.

This province, called Tebet, is of very great extent. The people, as I have told you, have a language of their own, and they border on Manzi and sundry other regions. Moreover, they are very great thieves.

The country is, in fact, so great that it embraces eight kingdoms, and a vast number of cities and villages. It contains in several quarters

Mountaineers on the Borders of Szechwan.

rivers and lakes, in which gold-dust is found in great abundance. Cinnamon also grows there in great plenty. Coral is in great demand in this country and fetches a high price, for they delight to hang it round the necks of their women and of their idols. They have also in this country plenty of fine woollens and other stuffs, and many kinds of spices are produced there which are never seen in our country.

Among this people, too, you find the best enchanters and astrologers

that exist in all that quarter of the world; they perform such extraordinary marvels and sorceries by diabolic art, that it astounds one to see or even hear of them. So I will relate none of them in this book of ours; people would be amazed if they heard them, but it would serve no good purpose.

These people of Tebet are an ill-conditioned race. They have mastiff dogs as big as donkeys, which are capital at seizing wild beasts, and in particular the wild oxen which are called *Beyamini*, very great and fierce animals. They have also sundry other kinds of sporting dogs, and excellent lanner falcons and sakers, swift in flight and well trained, which are got in the mountains of the country.

Now I have told you in brief all that is to be said about Tebet, and so we will leave it, and tell you about another province that is called Caindu.

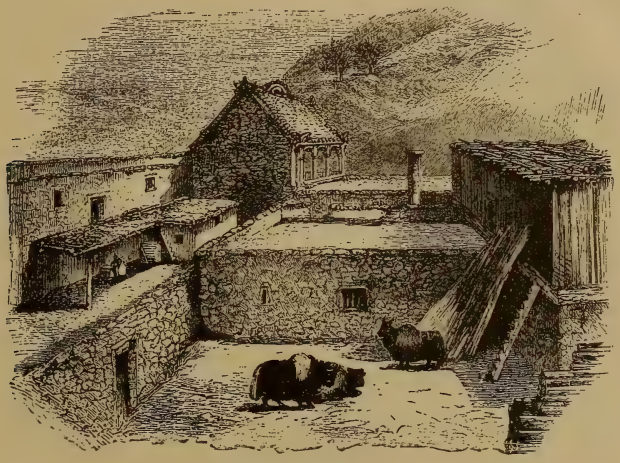
As regards Tebet, however, you should understand that it is subject to the Great Kaan. So, likewise, all the other kingdoms, regions, and provinces which are described in this book are subject to the Great Kaan; nay, even those other kingdoms, regions, and provinces of which I had occasion to speak at the beginning of the book as belonging to the son of Argon, the Lord of the Levant, are also subject to the Emperor; for the former holds his dominion of the Kaan, and is his liegeman and kinsman of the blood Imperial. So you must know that from this province forward all the provinces mentioned in our book are subject to the Great Kaan; and even if this be not specially mentioned, you must understand that it is so.

Now let us have done with this matter, and I will tell you about the Province of Caindu.

"Marco's travels in Thibet," said Fred, "were limited to the mountainous country on the frontier of Szechwan, which accounts in great measure for the brevity of his description. He exaggerates somewhat concerning the bamboo, but as he told his story before the invention of gunpowder it is very natural that he should think the noise of the bursting joints something terrific. A bamboo forest on fire sends off a series of reports like the

firing of musketry in a battle. When elephants are being driven in during a great hunt in Ceylon and Sumatra this property of the bamboo is put to practical use. Each of the beaters lights a fire at night and occasionally throws a joint of bamboo into it ; the air and moisture inside are expanded by the heat, and the joint explodes like the sound of a musket.

"A French missionary, M. Durand, who travelled in 1861 along the route described by Polo, gives the following account of it :



A Village of Eastern Thibet.

"'Every day we made a journey of nine or ten leagues, and halted for the night in a *Kung-kuan*. These are posts dotted at intervals of about ten leagues along the road to Hlassa, and usually guarded by three soldiers, though the more important posts have twenty. With the exception of some Tibetan houses, few and far between, these are the only habitations to be seen on this silent and deserted road. * * * Lytang was the first collection of houses that we had seen in ten days' march.'

"You see by this," remarked Fred, "that the country has not changed much in six centuries, and its population is very small. Let me say here that the missionaries of France have been among the most enterprising explorers of these little known

countries and have visited many places that no other European has seen. They generally adopt the dress of the natives and their mode of life, learn their language, and in every way try to

A Mountain Road in Thibet.

show themselves in full sympathy with the people they are endeavoring to convert to Christianity. M. Durand speaks of the huge dogs of the Thibetans, and describes a combat between

some of these animals and a leopard, in which the latter was beaten off. The Thibetans have several varieties of dogs ; the one referred to is probably the mastiff, which is famous for its strength and fierceness.

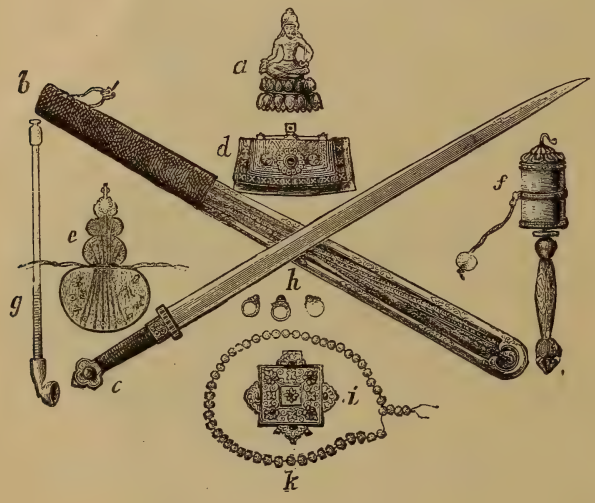
"A few figures concerning Thibet may not be without interest. The country is the most elevated part of Asia and the highest table-land in the world. It is everywhere from ten to twelve thousand feet high, and the mountains rise several thousand feet above the general elevation of the country. The total area is upwards of 700,000 square miles, but its population is thought to be less than five millions. They have comparatively little intercourse with the rest of the world, as they are suspicious of strangers, and their demand for the manufactures of other lands is not great. Wool is the principal article of export, and next to it come the precious metals, gold and silver. Tea, leather, precious stones, and cotton and silk goods are their principal imports.

Father Desgoudins, a French Missionary in Thibet.

"The country is under the nominal control of China, and garrisons of Chinese soldiers are scattered through it, but the government is largely in the hands of the Grand-Lama or high-priest of Buddhism, who resides at Lassa, the capital. Buddhism is the religion of Thibet and is devoutly professed by the inhabitants. Temples and shrines are numerous, and the priests form a large part of the population. We are indebted to Father Desgoudins, a French missionary, for many details of this singular people, but our time does not permit me to give them. I will close the evening by telling you of one of their peculiarities of worship—the use of the prayer-mill."

Fred paused a moment and the silence became breathless. Evidently his auditors were unable to make out what a prayer-mill was.

"They write their prayers on slips of paper," Fred explained, "and then fasten them around a wheel; through this wheel is a spindle on which it can turn freely. Every revolution of the wheel is supposed to be equivalent to a verbal repetition of the prayer, and the machine may be of any size agreed upon. Small wheels can be carried in the hand and whirled whenever convenient; larger ones are set up in the house and revolved by a push of the hand when any member of the family passes near it; others may be fastened to windmills and kept in action when a breeze is blowing, or they may be turned by water; and at the doors of the monasteries there are wheels the size of barrels, or even larger, which every person going in or out is expected to revolve. These prayer-mills are found wherever Buddhism prevails, but they are nowhere so common as in Thibet."



Thibetan Objects.

a, Brass image of Buddha; *b*, Scabbard; *c*, Sword; *d*, Tinder-Box with steel edge; *e*, Tobacco-pouch; *f*, Prayer-cylinder; *g*, Tobacco-pipe; *h*, Finger-rings; *i*, Amulet set with prescious stones; *k*, Rosary.

With this account of one of the customs of the dwellers on the other side of the world, Fred concluded his dissertation. The president was about to adjourn the meeting when some one asked if the Thibetans really made use of salt as a circulating medium instead of money.

"It is used there to some extent," said Dr. Allen, "but

not as much as in the time of our traveller. Salt is an article of necessity among them, and the people of the mountains not infrequently make raids upon Chinese villages in order to steal it; such expeditions are no more dishonorable than the horse-stealing enterprises of the Tartars or the American Indians. Salt is taken in trade very much as one might accept wheat or corn in this country; it is a staple article, and probably would be more acceptable to a merchant than any other commodity.

Salt Works in Western China.

"Modern travellers have not found it used as a circulating medium, and the cakes made at the salt works weigh a Chinese *picul* (133 pounds) instead of the half pound mentioned by Marco."

The propounder of the question thanked the doctor for his reply, and then the meeting adjourned.

CHAPTER XV.

Caindu and Its Wonders—Yunnan and Its Modern Condition—"People of Gold-Teeth"—A Wonderful Serpent—The Kingdom of Mien—Bangala—Curious Belief About the Spirits of the Dead—White Elephants at Mandalay—"The Great Shoay Dagon."

"I AM about to read of Caindu," said Frank, at the opening of the next session, "and will explain beforehand that I am describing a part of Yunnan, a province of Western China on the borders of Thibet and Burmah. Yunnan has an area of something more than one hundred thousand square miles, and a population of about six millions. Nine tenths of the people are Buddhists and the remainder Mohammedans. The latter rebelled in 1858 against the oppressions of the Chinese, and for several years maintained their independence, but the Chinese finally recaptured the capital city and restored their authority. Foreigners are not kindly received in Yunnan, and very few of them have visited the country."

With this brief statement concerning the route of Polo in his journey through Cathay, Frank resumed the reading of the narrative.

CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF CAINDU.

CAINDU is a province lying towards the west, and there is only one king in it. The people are Idolaters, subject to the Great Kaan, and they have plenty of towns and villages. The chief city is also called Caindu, and stands at the upper end of the province. There is a lake here, in which are found pearls which are white but not round. But the Great Kaan will not allow them to be fished, for if people were to take as many as they could find there, the supply would be so vast that pearls would lose their value, and come to be worth nothing. Only when it is his pleasure they take from the lake so many as he may desire; but any one

attempting to take them on his own account would be incontinently put to death.

There is also a mountain in this country wherein they find a kind of stone called turquoise, in great abundance; and it is a very beautiful stone. These also the Emperor does not allow to be extracted without his special order.

Valley of the River of Golden Sand.

The money matters of the people are conducted in this way. They have gold in rods which they weigh, and they reckon its value by its weight in *saggi*, but they have no coined money. Their small change again is made in this way. They have salt, which they boil and set in a mould flat below and round above, and every piece from the mould weighs about half a pound. Now, 80 moulds of this salt are worth one *saggio* of fine gold, which is a weight so called. So this salt serves them for small change.

The musk animals are very abundant in that country, and thus of

musk also they have great store. They have likewise plenty of fish which they catch in the lake in which the pearls are produced. Wild animals, such as lions, bears, wolves, stags, bucks, and roes, exist in great numbers; and there are also vast quantities of fowl of every kind. Wine of the vine they have none, but they make a wine of wheat and rice and sundry good spices, and very good drink it is. There grows also in this country a quantity of clove. The tree that bears it is a small one, with leaves like laurel but longer and narrower, and with a small white flower like the clove. They have also ginger and cinnamon in great plenty, besides other spices which never reach our countries, so we need say nothing about them.

Let me tell you first of this same country of Caindu that you ride through in ten days, constantly meeting with towns and villages, with people of the same description that I have mentioned. After riding those ten days you come to a river called BRIUS, which terminates the province of Caindu. In this river is found much gold-dust, and there is also much cinnamon on its banks.

CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF CARAJAN.

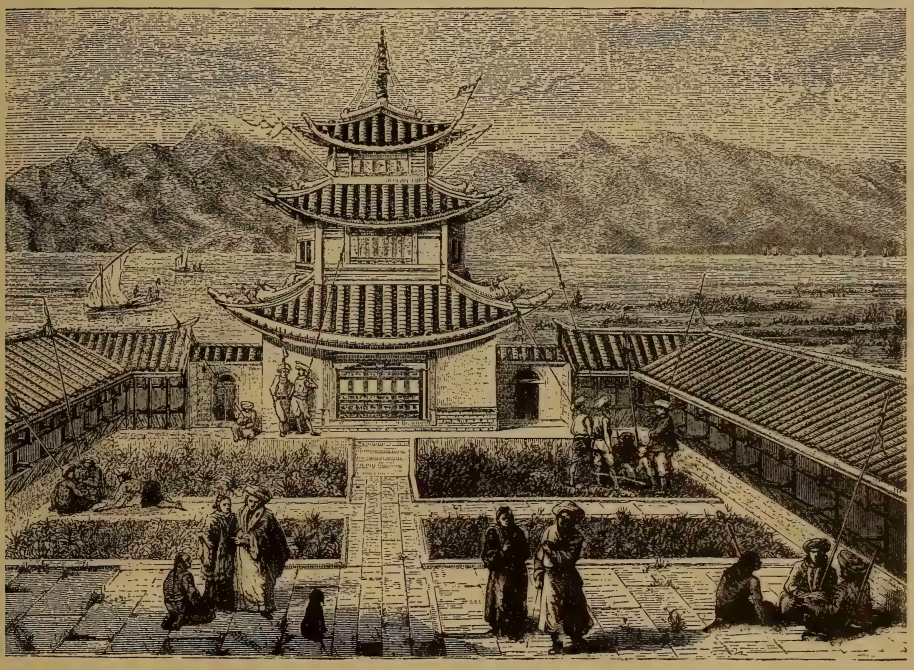
When you have passed that River you enter on the province of CARAJAN, which is so large that it includes seven kingdoms. It lies toward the west; the people are Idolaters, and they are subject to the Great Kaan. A son of his, however, is there as King of the country, by name ESSENTIMUR; a very great and rich and puissant Prince; and he well and justly rules his dominion, for he is a wise man and a valiant.

After leaving the river that I spoke of, you go five days' journey toward the west, meeting with numerous towns and villages. The country is one in which excellent horses are bred, and the people live by cattle and agriculture. They have a language of their own which is passing hard to understand. At the end of those five days' journey you come to the capital, which is called YACHI, a very great and noble city, in which are numerous merchants and craftsmen.

The people are of sundry kinds, for there are not only Saracens and Idolaters, but also a few Nestorian Christians. They have wheat and rice in plenty. Howbeit they never eat wheaten bread, because in that

country it is unwholesome. Rice they eat, and make of it sundry messes, besides a kind of drink which is very clear and good, and makes a man drunk just as wine does.

Their money is such as I will tell you. They use for the purpose certain white porcelain shells that are found in the sea, such as are sometimes put on dogs' collars; and 80 of these porcelain shells pass for a single weight of silver, equivalent to two Venice groats, *i. e.*, 24 piccoli. Also eight such weights of silver count equal to one such weight of gold.



Garden-House on the Lake at Yunnan-fu (the Yachi of Polo).

They have brine-wells in this country from which they make salt, and all the people of those parts make a living by this salt. The King, too I can assure you, gets a great revenue from this salt.

There is a lake in this country of a good hundred miles in compass, in which are found great quantities of the best fish in the world; fish of great size, and of all sorts.

Let me tell you also that the people of that country eat their meat raw, whether it be of mutton, beef, buffalo, poultry, or any other kind.

Thus the poor people will go to the shambles, and take the raw liver as it comes from the carcase and cut it small, and put it in a sauce of garlic and spices, and so eat it; and other meat in like manner, raw, just as we eat meat that is dressed.

CONCERNING A FURTHER PART OF THE PROVINCE OF CARAJAN.

After leaving that city of Yachi of which I have been speaking, and travelling ten days toward the west, you come to another capital city which is still in the province of Carajan, and is itself called Carajan. The people are Idolaters and subject to the Great Kaan; and the King is COGACHIN, who is a son of the Great Kaan.

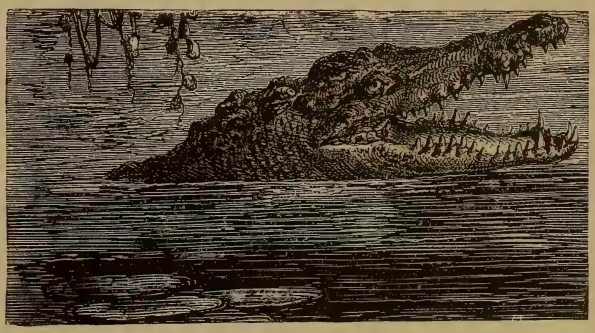
In this country gold-dust is found in great quantities; that is to say, in the rivers and lakes, whilst in the mountains gold is also found in pieces of larger size. Gold is indeed so abundant that they give one *saggio* of gold for only six of the same weight in silver. And for small change they use the porcelain shells as I mentioned before. These are not found in the country, however, but are brought from India.

In this province are found snakes and great serpents of such vast size as to strike fear into those who see them, and so hideous that the very account of them must excite the wonder of those who hear it. I will tell you how long and big they are.

You may be assured that some of them are ten paces in length; some are more and some less. And in bulk they are equal to a great cask, for the bigger ones are about ten palms in girth. They have two forelegs near the head, but for foot nothing but a claw like the claw of a hawk or that of a lion. The head is very big, and the eyes are bigger than a great loaf of bread. The mouth is large enough to swallow a man whole, and is garnished with great pointed teeth. And in short they are so fierce-looking and so hideously ugly, that every man and beast must stand in fear and trembling of them. There are also smaller ones, such as of eight paces long, and of five, and of one pace only.

The way in which they are caught is this. You must know that by day they live underground because of the great heat, and in the night they go out to feed, and devour every animal they can catch. They go also to drink at the rivers and lakes and springs. And their weight is so

great that when they travel in search of food or drink, as they do by night, the tail makes a great furrow in the soil as if a full tun of liquor had been dragged along. Now the huntsmen who go after them take them by a certain gyn which they set in the track over which the serpent has past, knowing that the beast will come back the same way. They plant a stake deep in the ground and fix on the head of this a sharp blade of steel made like a razor or a lance-point, and then they cover the whole with sand so that the serpent cannot see it. Indeed the huntsman plants several such stakes and blades on the track. On coming to the spot the beast strikes against the iron blade with such force that it enters his breast and rives him so that he dies on the spot, and the crows on seeing the brute dead begin to caw, and then the huntsmen know that the serpent is dead and come in search of him.



Head of One of Polo's "Serpents."

This then is the way these beasts are taken. Those who take them proceed to extract the gall from the inside, and this sells at a great price; for you must know it furnishes the material for a most precious medicine. Thus if a person is bitten by a mad dog, and they give him but a small pennyweight of this medicine to drink, he is cured in a moment. Again if one has any disease of the skin and applies a small quantity of this gall he shall speedily be cured. So you see why it sells at such a high price.

They also sell the flesh of this serpent, for it is excellent eating, and the people are very fond of it. And when these serpents are very hungry, sometimes they will seek out the lairs of lions or bears or other large wild beasts, and devour their cubs, without the sire and dam being able to prevent it. Indeed if they catch the big ones themselves they devour them too; they can make no resistance.

In this province also are bred large and excellent horses, which are taken to India for sale. And you must know that the people dock two

or three joints of the tail from their horses to prevent them from flipping their riders, a thing which they consider very unseemly. They ride long like Frenchmen, and wear armor of boiled leather, and carry spears and shields and arblasts, and all their quarrels are poisoned. And I was told as a fact that many persons, especially those meditating mischief, constantly carry this poison about with them, so that if by any chance they should be taken, and be threatened with torture, to avoid this they swallow the poison and so die speedily. But princes who are aware of this keep ready an antidote which they cause the criminal instantly to swallow, and thus they manage to cure those scoundrels.

I will tell you of a wicked thing they used to do before the Great Kaan conquered them. If it chanced that a man of fine person or noble birth, or some other quality that recommended him, came to lodge with those people, then they would murder him by poison or otherwise. And this they did, not for the sake of plunder, but because they believed that in this way the goodly favor and wisdom and repute of the murdered man would cleave to the house where he was slain. And in this manner many were murdered before the country was conquered by the Great Kaan. But since his conquest, some 35 years ago, these crimes and this evil practice have prevailed no more; and this through dread of the Great Kaan who will not permit such things.

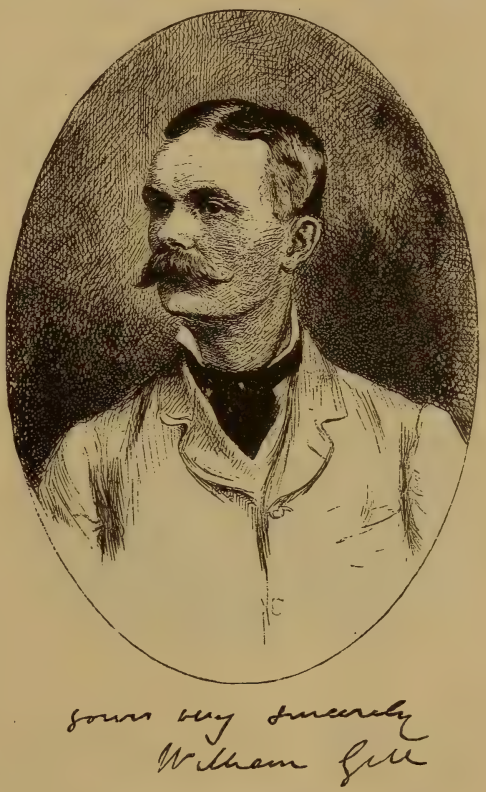
Frank paused here and sat down, remarking as he did so that he believed Fred had something interesting to lay before the audience.

"I am not entirely sure of that," said Fred, "but hope so at any rate."

"We have already considered," said he, "the use of salt for money, and here we have further testimony concerning the practice. In some parts of the interior of Africa salt was used as a circulating medium as early as the sixth century and as late as the fifteenth. At the present time many parts of Africa have no money, and travellers must pay their expenses with cloth and beads. It is a bulky currency, and requires every explorer to have a long train of men for the transportation of his pocket-

book. And there is a further trouble arising from the fact that the cloth and beads acceptable in one region are useless in another, and will not be taken at any price. Nails and iron hoops are a currency in some of the South Sea Islands, where they have no mines of iron or coal; sugar was formerly the base of trade among some wild tribes of American Indians; and it is possible," added Fred with a smile, "that some of the youths here present may recall the days when values were expressed in marbles and agates in their transactions with their schoolmates."

There was a ripple of laughter over Fred's last commentary on the circulating mediums of the globe, which gave him an opportunity to glance at his notes on the next subject for explanation.



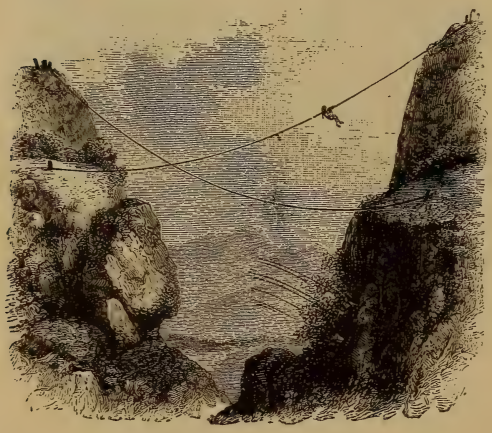
Capt. William Gill, Explorer of Yunnan.

"The spiced wine of this country is still in high repute with the people," he continued, "and is described by modern travellers in much the same way as Polo mentions it. Wild animals abound but probably less numerously than of old, but the lakes and rivers are full of water-fowl. Some writers think that Marco's tree 'with leaves like laurel but longer and narrower, and with a small white flower like the clove,' is the tea-tree of Assam. Others think he refers to the cassia tree which grows in Yunnan, and that the cloves he describes are cassia buds. Later travellers make mention of trees with white leaves, so that we

are sure the productions of the country have not materially changed.

"In the mountainous parts of Yunnan and also in Thibet they have bridges for crossing the streams and valleys, which are not likely to become popular in this country. I wonder they are not mentioned by Marco, but possibly they were not in use where he travelled.

"Captain Gill in 'The River of Golden Sand' describes one of these bridges which are freely used by the inhabitants. He says there are always two ropes, one for going, and one for returning, and the ropes are so arranged that each has a slope downwards. There is a small runner on the rope, consisting of half a cylinder eight inches in diameter and a foot long; the rope is a very large one of twisted bamboo, and the runner is placed upon it. The passenger takes a strong line, ties it around his body, passes it two or three times around himself and the runner so that it forms a sort of seat, and finally ties it around his body again. He is thus suspended below the big rope; then with both hands on the runner he raises his feet from the ground and shoots downwards at a tremendous pace. His speed is lessened as he reaches the slack part of the rope, and he finally has to draw himself up for the last few yards. It requires a good deal of nerve to cross in this way a deep ravine with a foaming torrent at its bottom.



Rope Bridge over a Valley.

"The River Brius is the upper part of the Yang-tse, where that mighty stream is known as the Chin-Sha-Kiang, or 'River of Golden Sand.' Carajan is the present province of Yunnan,

and the capital city, which Polo calls Yachi, is no other than, Yunnan-Fu, which is still the government centre of the province. It is walled, like most other Chinese cities, and the linear distance of its walls is said to be about seven miles. Formerly it had extensive suburbs, but they were destroyed in the Mohammedan insurrection which Frank mentioned at the beginning of the evening's proceedings.

"The people of Yunnan continue to live on rice instead of wheat, exactly as when Marco visited their country, and they make 'sundry messes' of it which are more satisfying to the Oriental than to the European palate. They have long since abandoned the use of cowrie shells in place of money, but these shells are still employed in some of the islands of the Indian Ocean and along the coasts of Africa and India. They are equivalent to the wampum of the American Indians, and the chief objection to them is their bulk. Down to the early part of this century the revenues of many parts of India were paid in cowries which were valued at about seven thousand to the dollar! Large warehouses were required for storing them, and whole fleets of boats were employed in their transportation."

Gorge on the Chin-Sha-Kiang.

Fred paused a moment and some one took advantage of his hesitation to ask what a cowrie shell was like.

"There are several varieties," he replied, "but the one we have to deal with is called the money cowrie. It is an oval shell about an inch long, convex on one side and flat on the other. The flat side has a sort of toothed opening which extends the entire length of the shell, Generally the convex side is cut away

so as to make a hole which allows the shells to be strung on a cord or wire. Cowries are found in the Indian Ocean, and are the principal export of the Maldive Islands. Many tons of them are annually imported into England for African commerce, and it is said that they were first employed by British merchants in the now abandoned slave-trade.

"Having told you about the cowrie," said the youth, "we will continue our study of Yunnan.

"The brine-wells are flowing yet, and the manufacture of salt is one of the industries of the country. The lake mentioned by Marco is probably the one on which Yunnan-Fu stands; numerous canals have been cut from it, so that boats from the lake may traverse the city in every direction. Captain Gill thinks another lake is intended; as there are several lakes in Yunnan we can take our choice without harming any one. The same traveller describes the people as very poor, and says they are greatly oppressed by their Chinese rulers. The country was sadly devastated during the Mohammedan rebellion, and many cities and villages were laid in ruins."

Some one asked about the statement of Polo that the people lived on raw meat just as we eat cooked food.

"If they are as poor as described by Captain Gill," Fred replied, "they would be ready to eat food in any form, whether raw or cooked. Modern travellers have said nothing of this peculiarity, and we are in the dark as to the correctness of Polo's statement.

"The second city of Yunnan mentioned by Polo is doubtless Talifu, on a lake of the same name. The lake is drained into the Mekong River which flows through Cochin China; the crocodile is found in the Mekong, and it is doubtless this reptile which Marco describes as a serpent ten paces in length. He seems to have studied the animal very carelessly as he discovered only one pair of feet, while the well-bred crocodile is provided with double that number. But there can be no mistake about the ferocity of the countenance and the huge eyes,

Northern End of Lake of Talifu.

and furthermore the manner of killing him is well described. There are other ways of taking the crocodile, the most popular one being to dig a long pit parallel to the water's edge, place sharp stakes in the bottom, cover the pit with leaves and brushwood, and then tie a young goat to a stake on the side of the pit farthest from the water. Attracted by the bait the crocodile is lured into the pit, where he is impaled on the stakes and easily despatched. His flesh is eaten by the natives of Cochin China, Cambodia, and some parts of India, but is abhorred by Europeans.

"The gall of the crocodile has yet a high reputation as a medicine among certain Oriental people, but is not prescribed by Western doctors. The Chinese use many articles in their medical practice that are unknown to Europe, and this is one of them.

"The superstition about the spirit of a good man remaining where he was slain," continued Fred, "is not confined to Yunnan and the time of Polo. Captain Gill describes something like it among the Manzi, as I have already told you, and I have read that the Goldees, a people living on the Amoor River in Siberia, have exactly the belief described by Polo. They hold that when a man dies his spirit remains around the place where he breathed his last. Therefore, when one comes among them with whom they are pleased they kill him in order to retain his spirit in their houses; they are not actuated by malice, and the better and more kindly the disposition of the stranger the more likely are they to kill him."

Here Frank rose to continue the reading, but before resuming he remarked that it might be advisable for future travellers among the Goldees to behave as badly as possible in order to ensure their safety. "And I have heard," said he, "of modern travellers in various parts of the world whose lives would be in no danger among these people of the Amoor if their conduct had any influence upon their fate."

CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF ZARDANDAN.

When you have left Carajàn and have travelled five days westward, you find a province called ZARDANDAN. The capital city is called VOCHAN.

The people of this country all have their teeth gilt; or rather every man covers his teeth with a sort of golden case made to fit them, both the upper teeth and the under. The men do this, but not the women. The men also are wont to gird their arms and legs with bands or fillets pricked in black, and it is done thus; they take five needles joined together, and with these they prick the flesh till the blood comes, and then they rub in a certain black coloring stuff, and this is perfectly indelible. It is considered a piece of elegance and the sign of gentility to have this black band. The men are all gentlemen in their fashion, and do nothing but go to the wars, or go hunting and hawking. The ladies do all the business, aided by the slaves who have been taken in war.

They eat all kinds of meat, both raw and cooked, and they eat rice with their cooked meat as their fashion is. Their drink is wine made of rice and spices, and excellent it is. Their money is gold, and for small change they use pig-shells. And I can tell you they give one weight of gold for only five of silver; for there is no silver-mine within five months' journey. And this induces merchants to go thither carrying a large supply of silver to change among that people. And as they have only five weights of silver to give for one of fine gold, they make immense profits by their exchange business in that country.

These people have neither idols nor churches, but worship the progenitor of their family, "for 't is he," say they, "from whom we have all sprung." They have no letters or writing; and 't is no wonder, for the country is wild and hard of access, full of great woods and mountains which 't is impossible to pass, the air in summer is so impure and bad; and any foreigners attempting it would die for certain. When these people have any business transactions with one another, they take a piece of stick, round or square, and split it, each taking half. And on either half they cut two or three notches. And when the account is settled the debtor receives back the other half of the stick from the creditor.

And let me tell you that in all those three provinces that I have been speaking of, to wit Carajan, Vochan, and Yachi, there is never a leech. But when any one is ill they send for their magicians, that is to say the Devil-conjurors and those who are the keepers of the idols. When these

Hill Tribes of Yunnan. (From a Chinese Drawing.)

are come the sick man tells them what ails him, and then the conjurors incontinently begin playing on their instruments and singing and dancing; and the conjurors dance to such a pitch that at last one of them shall fall to the ground lifeless, like a dead man. And then the devil entereth into

his body. And when his comrades see him in this plight they begin to put questions to him about the sick man's ailment. And he will reply: "Such or such a spirit hath been meddling with the man, for that he hath angered the spirit and done it some despite." Then they say: "We pray thee to pardon him, and to take of his blood or of his goods what thou wilt in consideration of thus restoring him to health." And when they have so prayed, the malignant spirit that is in the body of the prostrate man will (mayhap) answer: "The sick man hath also done great despite unto such another spirit, and that one is so ill-disposed that it will not pardon him on any account";—this at least is the answer they get, an the patient be like to die. But if he is to get better the answer will be that they are to bring two sheep, or may be three; and to brew ten or twelve jars of drink, very costly and abundantly spiced. Moreover it shall be announced that the sheep must be all black-faced, or of some other particular color as it may hap; and then all those things are to be offered in sacrifice to such and such a spirit whose name is given. And they are to bring so many conjurors, and so many ladies, and the business is to be done with a great singing of lauds, and with many lights, and store of good perfumes. That is the sort of answer they get if the patient is to get well. And then the kinsfolk of the sick man go and procure all that has been commanded, and do as has been bidden, and the conjuror who had uttered all that gets on his legs again.

So they fetch the sheep of the color prescribed, and slaughter them, and sprinkle the blood over such places as have been enjoined, in honor and propitiation of the spirit. And the conjurors come, and the ladies, in the number that was ordered, and when all are assembled and every thing is ready, they begin to dance and play and sing in honor of the spirit. And they take flesh-broth, and drink, and lign-aloes, and a great number of lights, and go about hither and thither, scattering the broth and the drink and the meat also. And when they have done this for a while, again shall one of the conjurors fall flat and wallow there foaming at the mouth, and then the others will ask if he have yet pardoned the sick man? And sometimes he shall answer yea! and sometimes he shall answer no! And if the answer be *no*, they shall be told that something or other has to be done all over again, and then he will be pardoned; so

this they do. And when all that the spirit has commanded has been done with great ceremony, then it shall be announced that the man is pardoned and shall be speedily cured. So when they at length receive such a reply, they announce that it is all made up with the spirit, and that he is propitiated, and they fall to eating and drinking with great joy and mirth, and he who had been lying lifeless on the ground gets up and takes his share. So when they have all eaten and drunken, every man departs home. And presently the sick man gets sound and well.

Inhabitants of Western Yunnan.

Now that I have told you of the customs and naughty ways of that people, we will have done talking of them and their province, and I will tell you about others, all in regular order and succession.

"Zardandan means, in Persian, 'Gold-teeth,'" said Fred, as Frank sat down. "The people of that name are mentioned several times in history, but they do not seem to exist at present in the country where Marco places them. Some of the people of Sumatra have cases of gold and silver for their teeth. Sir Stamford Raffles says of the Sumatrans: 'The great men sometimes set their teeth in gold, by casing with a plate of that metal the under row. It is sometimes indented to the shape of the teeth, but more usually quite plain, and they do not remove it either to eat or sleep.' Tattooing still appears to be in fashion, as one recent traveller says the people of both sexes tattoo their limbs slightly from the knee downwards, and some wear rings of rattan below the knee. The greatest devotees of tattooing are the Japanese *Bettos*, or Grooms. They cover the entire body with all sorts of fantastic figures, so that their skins at a little distance resemble pieces of calico.

"The practice of exorcism as a cure for disease prevails in various ways in many countries, but particularly in Asia. The

form described by Polo is closely allied to that of the Siberian tribes, who call in the *Shaman*, or Devil-priest, whenever any one falls ill. The Shaman invariably makes a feast of some sort, and creates a frightful noise, so that if the evil spirit has any fondness for peace and quietness she is glad to leave the patient and go somewhere else. If he fails to cure the disease the Shaman gets out of the difficulty by declaring it is caused by a spirit over whom he has no control, but he does not hesitate to appropriate all the presents that have been offered. The performance of the dancing dervishes of Arab countries have a close relation to the practices of the Shamans."

Tattooed Female Hand.

Fred paused and nodded to Frank, who immediately rose and said that the next two chapters were devoted to a somewhat dreary description of a battle between two kings of the East. He would therefore skip them and read

OF THE GREAT DESCENT THAT LEADS TOWARDS THE KINGDOM OF MIEN.

After leaving the Province of which I have been speaking you come to a great Descent. In fact you ride for two days and a half continually down hill. On all this descent there is nothing worthy of mention except only that there is a large place there where occasionally a great market is held; for all the people of the country round come thither on fixed days, three times a week, and hold a maket there. They exchange gold for silver; for they have gold in abundance; and they give one weight of fine gold for five weights of fine silver; so this induces merchants to come from various quarters bringing silver which they exchange for gold with these people; and in this way the merchants make great gain. As regards those people of the country who dispose of gold so cheaply, you must understand that nobody is acquainted with their places

of abode, for they dwell in inaccessible positions, in sites so wild and strong that no one can get at them to meddle with them. Nor will they allow anybody to accompany them so as to gain a knowledge of their abodes.

After you have ridden those two days and a half down hill, you find yourself in a province towards the south which is pretty near to India, and this province is called AMIEN. You travel therein for fifteen days through a very unfrequented country, and through great woods abound-

Dancing Dervishes at Bokhara.

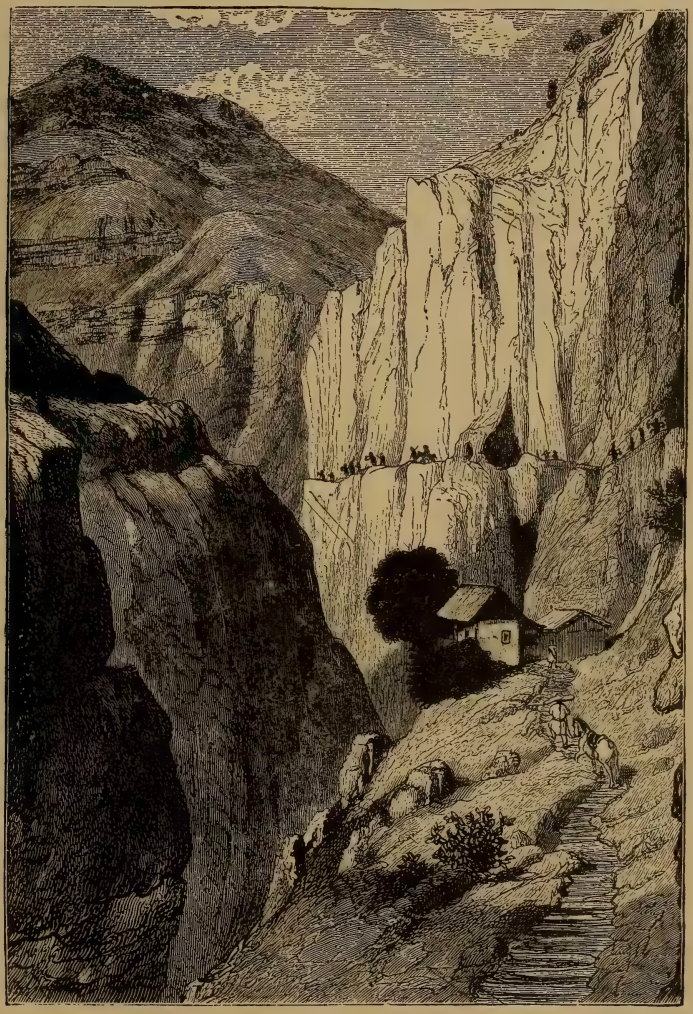
ing in elephants and unicorns and numbers of other wild beasts. There are no dwellings and no people, so we need say no more of this wild country, for in sooth there is nothing to tell.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF MIEN, AND THE TWO TOWERS THAT ARE THEREIN, ONE OF GOLD AND THE OTHER OF SILVER.

And when you have travelled those 15 days through such a difficult country as I have described, in which travellers have to carry provisions for the road because there are no inhabitants, then you arrive at the

capital city of this Province of Mien, and it also is called AMIEN, and is a very great and noble city.

And in this city there is a thing so rich and rare that I must tell you



Road from Yunnan to the Valley of the Chin-Sha-Kiang.

about it. You see there was in former days a rich and puissant king in this city, and when he was about to die he commanded that by his tomb they should erect two towers, one at either end, one of gold and the

other of silver, in such fashion as I shall tell you. The towers are built of fine stone; and then one of them has been covered with gold a good finger in thickness, so that the tower looks as if it were all of solid gold; and the other is covered with silver in like manner, so that it seems to be all of solid silver. Each tower is a good ten paces in height and of breadth in proportion. The upper part of these towers is round, and girt all about with bells, the top of the gold tower with gilded bells and the silver tower with silvered bells, insomuch that whenever the wind blows among these bells they tinkle. The tomb likewise was plated partly with gold and partly with silver. The King caused these towers to be erected to commemorate his magnificence and for the good of his soul; and really they do form one of the finest sights in the world; so exquisitely finished are they, so splendid and costly. And when they are lighted up by the sun they shine most brilliantly and are visible from a vast distance.

Now you must know that the Great Kaan conquered the country in this fashion.

You see at the Court of the Great Kaan there was a great number of gleemen and jugglers; and he said to them one day that he wanted them to go and conquer the aforesaid province of Mien, and that he would give them a good Captain to lead them and other good aid. And they replied that they would be delighted. So the Emperor caused them to be fitted out with all that an army requires, and gave them a Captain and a body of men-at-arms to help them; and so they set out, and marched until they came to the country and province of Mien. And they did conquer the whole of it! And when they found in the city the two towers of gold and silver of which I have been telling you, they were greatly astonished, and sent word thereof to the Great Kaan, asking what he would have them do with the two towers, seeing what a great quantity of wealth there was upon them. And the Great Kaan, being well aware that the King had caused these towers to be made for the good of his soul, and to preserve his memory after his death, said that he would not have them injured, but would have them left precisely as they were. And that was no wonder either, for you must know that no Tartar in the world will ever, if he can help it, lay hand on any thing appertaining to the dead.

They have in this province numbers of elephants and wild oxen ; also beautiful stags and deer and roe, and other kinds of large game in plenty.

CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF BANGALA.

BANGALA is a Province towards the south, which up to the year 1290, when the aforesaid Messer Marco Polo was still at the Court of the Great Kaan, had not yet been conquered ; but his armies had gone thither to make the conquest. You must know that this Province has a peculiar language, and that the people are wretched Idolaters. They are tolerably close to India. There are numbers of slaves there, insomuch that all the Barons who keep them get them from that Province.

The people have oxen as tall as elephants, but not so big. They live on flesh and milk and rice. They grow cotton, in which they drive a great trade, and also spices such as spikenard, galingale, ginger, sugar, and many other sorts. And the people of India also come thither in search of slaves, male and female, of which there are great numbers, taken from other provinces with which those of the country are at war ; and these slaves are sold to the Indian and other merchants who carry them thence for sale about the world.

There is nothing more to mention about this country, so we will quit it, and I will tell you of another province called Caugigu.

"Marco speaks of the markets being held three times a week in the country he is now describing," Fred remarked, as Frank paused. "At present the markets are held there every fifth day, and the practice is said to be general throughout Western Yunnan. It is found in Java and also in Mexico, and there are parts of India and Cochin China where the same interval elapses between the market-days.

"Captain Gill describes a curious custom that he found in the market of I-Chang, an interior city of China. The price of a thing is never varied, but the number of ounces to the pound is increased or diminished according to its abundance or scarcity."

The laugh that greeted this strange story was followed by a question as to whether the people of that country exchanged gold for silver at the rate mentioned by Marco.

"They still bring gold from the mountains," said Fred in reply to the interrogatory, "but the old rate of exchange is not kept up. The Chinese are too sharp to allow such a state of things to last long, and you can be sure the people get for their gold as much as it is worth."

"The province of Amien, which Polo next describes, is doubtless Burmah. The city of Mien is not identified to the satisfaction of everybody, but is generally supposed to be Pagan, which was then the capital of that country. It was captured by the Mongols in the latter part of the thirteenth century, and is now of little consequence. The king who reigned in Pagan during Polo's time built a magnificent pagoda, which he filled with golden images of Buddha and his disciples, together with other models and images of the same material and of great value. This is probably the foundation of Marco's story, but the account of the way the city was captured is too absurd for consideration.

"Mandalay is the present capital of Burmah, while Rangoon is its seaport. Three provinces of the coast are under British control, and the whole country will be dominated by the English flag before many years. All the cities of Burmah are full of the monuments of Buddhism, and some of them are famous for their grandeur. The *Shoay Dagon*, or Golden Pagoda, of Rangoon is one of the finest of the temples, and the first object in that city to which the traveller directs his steps. Perhaps Dr. Allen will tell us about it."

"With pleasure," said the doctor, as he rose to respond to the youth's request. "The Golden Pagoda is a striking edifice, and visible for a great distance. It is on a hill that elevates it above all other buildings in Rangoon; the pagoda is five hundred feet square, and rises from a platform one thousand feet square to a height of nearly three hundred feet. It is built of brick and stone and covered with gold leaf; the gold that was used in covering it was said to equal the weight of the king who ordered the work, and to judge by its extent he must have been a giant in

size. Inside the temple there are many statues of Buddha, some of them very large; all are gilded and some very thickly, and the garments of many are made of bits of glass put together with a great deal of ingenuity."

As the doctor sat down Fred continued his comments upon Polo's story.

"You are all aware," said he, "that elephants are numerous in Burmah; in fact, the country is one of the lands of the elephant, and of the white elephant too. The present king has several of these animals, which are kept close to his palace at Mandalay; they are taken out for an occasional airing, accompanied by a train of attendants who hold umbrellas at the end of long sticks to shield the precious beasts from the sun. Bangala, which Polo mentions as a province towards the south, is evidently intended for Bengal, but he is wrong as to its position, though generally correct in describing its products. It is doubtful if he ever visited Bengal, and his accounts of it are certainly very meagre.

Palace of the King of Burmah, at Mandalay.

"But I see our president glancing at the clock," continued

the youth, "and know it is time for me to stop. We have given you enough to think of for one evening at least, and therefore I move that we adjourn."

The motion was seconded and unanimously carried.

An Oriental Dwelling-House.

CHAPTER XVI.

Various Provinces and Cities of China—Neighboring Countries—The Conquest of Manzi—Manners and Customs—"Baron Hundred-Eyes"—Exposure of Infants in China—Identity of Cities Described by Polo—An American Anecdote.

At the next meeting of the Society Frank was unable to appear in his usual place on account of a severe cold which rendered his voice altogether too harsh for reading purposes. His duties were temporarily assigned to his friend and schoolmate, Charles Fisher, who apologized for any imperfections that might be discovered in his elocution, on the ground that he was without experience, and had undertaken the task at only a few hours' notice. He was assured by the president that nobody was inclined to find any imperfections; they were all sure he would do his best, and no one could ask or expect more. Thus encouraged, the youth read in a clear and well-modulated voice, beginning with

DISCOURSES OF THE PROVINCE OF CAUGIGU.

Caugigu is a province towards the east, which has a king. The people are Idolaters, and have made their submission to the Great Kaan, and send him tribute every year. And let me tell you their king is so given to luxury that he hath at the least 300 wives; for whenever he hears of any beautiful woman in the land, he takes and marries her.

They find in this country a good deal of gold, and they also have great abundance of spices. But they are such a long way from the sea that the products are of little value, and thus their price is low. They have elephants in great numbers, and other cattle of sundry kinds, and plenty of game. They live on flesh and milk and rice, and have wine made of rice and good spices. The whole of the people, or nearly so, have their skin marked with the needle in patterns representing lions, dragons, birds, and what not, done in such a way that it can never be

obliterated. This work they cause to be wrought over face and neck and chest, arms and hands, and, in short, the whole body; and they look on it as a token of elegance, so that those who have the largest amount of this embroidery are regarded with the greatest admiration.

CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF ANIN.

ANIN is a Province toward the east, the people of which are subject to the Great Kaan, and are Idolaters. They live by cattle and tillage, and have a peculiar language. The women wear on the legs and arms bracelets of gold and silver of great value, and the men wear such as are even yet more costly. They have plenty of horses, which they sell in great numbers to the Indians, making a great profit thereby. And they have also vast herds of buffaloes and oxen, having excellent pastures for these. They have likewise all the necessaries of life in abundance.

Now you must know that between Anin and Caugigu, which we have left behind us, there is a distance of twenty-five days' journey; and from Caugigu to Bangala, the third province in our rear, is thirty days' journey.

CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF COLOMAN.

COLOMAN is a province eight days' journey toward the east, the people of which are Idolaters and have a peculiar language. They are a tall and very handsome people, though in complexion brown rather than white, and are good soldiers. They have a good many towns, and a vast number of villages, among great mountains, and in strong positions.

When any of them die the bodies are burnt, and then they take the bones and put them in little chests. These are carried high up the mountains, and placed in great caverns, where they are hung up in such wise that neither man nor beast can come at them.

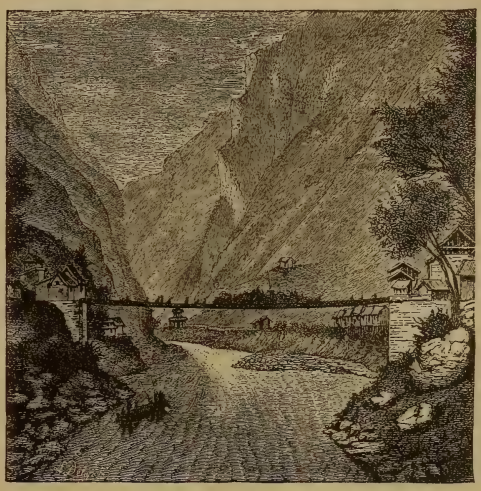
A good deal of gold is found in the country, and for petty traffic they use porcelain shells such as I have told you of before. All these provinces that I have been speaking of, to wit Bangala and Caugigu and Anin, employ for currency porcelain shells and gold. There are merchants in this country who are very rich and dispose of large quantities of goods. The people live on flesh and rice and milk, and brew their wine from rice and excellent spices.

CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF CUIJU.

CUIJU is a province towards the east. After leaving Coloman you travel along a river for twelve days, meeting with a good number of towns and villages, but nothing worthy of particular mention. After you have travelled those twelve days along the river you come to a great and noble city which is called FUNGUL.

The people live by trade and handicrafts, and they manufacture stuffs of the bark of certain trees which form very fine summer clothing. They are good soldiers, and have paper-money. For you must understand that henceforward we are in the countries where the Great Kaan's paper-money is current.

The country swarms with lions to that degree that no man can venture to sleep outside his house at night. Moreover, when you travel on that river, and come to a halt at night, unless you keep a good way from the bank the lions will spring on the boat and snatch one of the crew and make off with him and devour him. And but for a certain help that the inhabitants enjoy, no one could venture to travel in that province, because of the multitude of those lions, and because of their strength and ferocity.



Iron Suspension Bridge in the Cuiju Mountains.

But you see they have in this province a large breed of dogs, so fierce and bold that two of them together will attack a lion. So every man who goes a journey takes with him a couple of those dogs, and when a lion appears they have at him with the greatest boldness, and the lion turns on them, but can't touch them for they are very deft at eschewing his blows. So they follow him, perpetually giving tongue, and watching their chance to give him a bite in the rump or in the thigh, or wherever they may.

The lion makes no reprisal except now and then to turn fiercely on them, and then indeed were he to catch the dogs it would be all over with them, but they take good care that he shall not. So, to escape the dogs' din, the lion makes off, and gets into the wood, where mayhap he stands at bay against a tree. And when the travellers see the lion in this plight they take to their bows, for they are capital archers, and shoot their arrows at him till he falls dead. And 't is thus that travellers in those parts do deliver themselves from those lions.

They have a good deal of silk and other products which are carried up and down, by the river of which we spoke, into various quarters.

You travel along the river for twelve days more, finding a good many towns all along, and the people always Idolaters, and subject to the Great Kaan, with paper-money current, and living by trade and handicrafts. There are also plenty of fighting men. And after travelling those 12 days you arrive at the city of Sindafu of which we spoke in this book some time ago.

From Sindafu you set out again and travel some 70 days through the provinces and cities and towns which we have already visited, and all which have been already particularly spoken of in our Book. At the end of those 70 days you come to Juju where we were before.

From Juju you set out again and travel four days toward the south, finding many towns and villages. The people are great traders and craftsmen, are all Idolaters, and use the paper-money of the Great Kaan their Sovereign. At the end of those four days you come to the city of Cacanfu belonging to the province of Cathay.

CONCERNING THE CITIES OF CACANFU AND OF CHANGLU.

CACANFU is a noble city. The people have plenty of silk from which they weave stuffs of silk and gold, and sandals in large quantities. There are also certain Christians at this place, who have a church. And the city is at the head of an important territory containing numerous towns and villages. A great river passes through it, on which much merchandize is carried to the city of Cambaluc, for by many channels and canals it is connected therewith.

We will now set forth again, and travel three days towards the south,

Girls of Laos.

and then we come to a town called CHANGLU. This is another great city belonging to the Great Kaan, and to the province of Cathay. The people have paper-money and burn their dead; they make salt in great quantities at this place; I will tell you how 't is done.

A kind of earth is found there which is exceedingly salt. This they dig up and pile in great heaps. Upon these heaps they pour water in quantities till it runs out at the bottom; and then they take up this water and boil it well in great iron cauldrons, and as it cools it deposits a fine white salt in very small grains. This salt they then carry about for sale to many neighboring districts, and get great profit thereby.

There is nothing else worth mentioning, so let us go forward five days' journey, and we shall come to a city called Chinangli.

Charles went triumphantly through his first effort at public reading, and was heartily applauded. Blushes and smiles of satisfaction covered his face as he bowed his acknowledgments and sat down to make way for Fred with his commentaries.

"There has been," said the latter, "a great deal of discussion as to the identity of the provinces of Caugigu and Anin, and many pages have been written on the subject. But to make a summary of the arguments, and judging by the description of the countries and their inhabitants, we may conclude that Caugigu stands for Laos, a country lying north and east of Siam and tributary to that kingdom. The king of Laos has a great many wives, his people tattoo themselves in the manner described by Polo, and they have plenty of 'elephants and other cattle of sundry kinds.' In the southern part of Laos tattooing seems to have gone out of fashion, but it is still practised in the north. Few European travellers have been to that region, and our accounts of it are not very complete.

"Anin is probably the southern part of Yunnan, and was not personally visited by Polo. Coloman is supposed to be a part of Western China on the borders of Yunnan. At any rate the description seems to indicate the Lolos or Lolo-man. A Chinese book concerning the frontier tribes of the empire was translated

some time ago by one of the missionaries to the East. Here is what it says of the Lolos :

" They are tall, of a dark complexion, with sunken eyes, aquiline nose, wear long whiskers, and have the beard shaved off above the mouth.

People of Coloman. (From a Chinese Drawing.)

They pay great deference to demons, and on that account are sometimes called ' Dragons of Lo.' The men bind their hair into a tuft with blue cloth and make it fast on the forehead like a horn. Their upper dresses

are short, with large sleeves, and their lower garments are fine blue. When one of the chieftains dies, all that were under him are assembled together clad in armor and on horseback. Having dressed his corpse in silk and woollen robes, they burn it in the open country; then, invoking the departed spirit, they inter the ashes. Their attachment to him as their sole master is such that nothing can drive or tempt them from their allegiance. Their large bows, long spears, and sharp swords are strong and well-wrought. They train excellent horses, love archery and hunting; and so expert are they in tactics that their soldiers rank as the best among all the uncivilized tribes.' "

"This seems to be almost a reproduction of the words of the great Venetian, and leaves little doubt that he had these people in mind. And here is a picture of the Lolos taken from the book I have quoted."

Fortified Village in Kweichau.

Fred exhibited a drawing by a Chinese artist representing a group of men, some mounted and some on foot, and all armed with spears. They were passing around the base of a mountain, thus indicating that their country was not a level one, and their features were evidently of Chinese origin. The picture was passed around for inspection, and as soon as it returned Fred resumed his commentaries.

"Cuiju," said he, "is doubtless Kweichau, a province of China northeast of Yunnan.

"Fungul is probably intended for Fungun, which was a city of note in the time of Kublai and his immediate successors. They have cloth made from the bark of trees in that part of

China, just as they have it in other parts of the world ; some of these fabrics find their way to Europe and America, where they are known as grass-cloths. The ladies will understand its character when I tell them it resembles *batiste*."

"But they don't have lions in that part of China, do they?" inquired one of the younger members of the audience, who was

Inhabitants of Southern Yunnan.

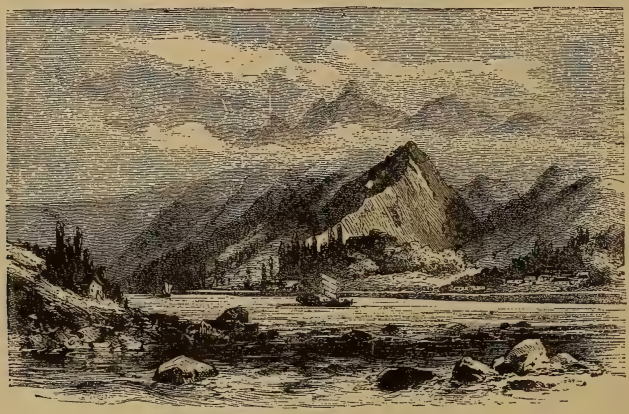
not present at the time Fred told about the so-called "lions" of Mongolia.

Fred repeated his explanation that by lions Polo undoubtedly meant tigers, as there are no lions in any part of the empire unless they have been taken there for exhibition. He further said that the great dogs of Kweichau had been seen by several travellers, and are similar to the dogs we have heard about in Szechwan.

"Cacanfu has been identified," continued Fred, "as Hokianfu in Pecheli, and Changlu is supposed to be Tsangchu in the same province. Marco is rather tiresome in his frequent allusions to cremation, and the use of paper-money, but it is his way of saying that the people he is describing are Chinese. Missionaries say that salt is still made in the manner described by him.

"And now," he concluded, "we will hear from Charles once more."

Thus appealed to, Charles blushed again and continued his reading.



The Great River Above Chinangli.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF CHINANGLI, AND THAT OF TADINFU, AND THE REBELLION OF LIYTAN.

CHINANGLI is a city of Cathay as you go south. There runs through the city a great and wide river, on which a large traffic in silk goods and spices and other costly merchandize passes up and down.

When you travel south from Chinangli for five days, you meet everywhere with fine towns and villages, the people of which live by trade and handicrafts, and have all the necessaries of life in great abundance, but there is nothing particular to mention on the way till you come, at the end of those five days, to TADINFU.

This, you must know, is a very great city, and in old times was the

seat of a great kingdom ; but the Great Kaan conquered it by force of arms. Nevertheless it is still the noblest city in all those provinces. There are very great merchants here who trade on a great scale, and the abundance of silk is something marvellous. They have, moreover, most charming gardens abounding with fruit of large size. The city of Tadinfu hath also under its rule eleven imperial cities of great importance, all of which enjoy a large and profitable trade, owing to that immense produce of silk.

Now, you must know, that in the year 1273, the Great Kaan had sent a certain Baron called LIYTAN SANGON, with some 80,000 horse, to this province and city to garrison them. And after the said captain had tarried there awhile, he formed a disloyal and traitorous plot, and stirred up the great men of the province to rebel against the Great Kaan. And so they did ; for they broke into revolt against their sovereign lord, and refused all obedience to him, and made this Liytan, whom their sovereign had sent thither for their protection, to be the chief of their revolt.

When the Great Kaan heard thereof he straightway despatched two of his Barons, one of whom was called AGUIL and the other MONGOTAY ; giving them 100,000 horse and a great force of infantry. But the affair was a serious one, for the Barons were met by the rebel Liytan with all those whom he had collected from the province, mustering more than 100,000 horse and a large force of foot. Nevertheless in the battle Liytan and his party were utterly routed, and the two Barons whom the Emperor had sent won the victory. When the news came to the Great Kaan he was right well pleased, and ordered that all the chiefs who had rebelled, or excited others to rebel, should be put to a cruel death, but that those of lower rank should receive a pardon. And so it was done. The two Barons had all the leaders of the enterprise put to a cruel death, and all of those of lower rank were pardoned. And thenceforward they conducted themselves with loyalty towards their lord.

CONCERNING THE NOBLE CITY OF SINJUMATU.

On leaving Tadinfu you travel three days towards the south, always finding numbers of noble and populous towns and villages flourishing with trade and manufactures. There is also abundance of game in the country, and every thing in profusion.

When you have travelled those three days you come to the noble city of SINJUMATU, a rich and fine place, with great trade and manufactures. The people are subjects of the Great Kaan, and have paper-money, and they have a river which I can assure you brings them great gain, and I will tell you about it.

You see the river in question flows from the south to this city of Sinjumatu. And the people of the city have divided this larger river in two, making one half of it flow east and the other half flow west; that is to say, the one branch flows towards Manzi and the other towards Cathay. And it is a fact that the number of vessels at this city is what no one would believe without seeing them. The quantity of merchandize also which these vessels transport to Manzi and Cathay is something marvellous; and then they return loaded with other merchandize, so that the amount of goods borne to and fro on those two rivers is quite astonishing.

CONCERNING THE CITIES OF LINJU AND PIJU.

On leaving the city of Sinjumatu you travel for eight days toward the south, always coming to great and rich towns and villages flourishing with trade and manufactures. At the end of those eight days you come to the city of LINJU, in the province of the same name, of which it is the capital. It is a rich and noble city, and the men are good soldiers, nathelessthey carry on great trade and manufactures. There is great abundance of game in both beasts and birds, and all the necessaries of life are in profusion. The place stands on the river of which I told you above. And they have here great numbers of vessels, even greater than those of which I spoke before, and these transport a great amount of costly merchandize.

So, quitting this province and city of Linju, you travel three days more towards the south, constantly finding numbers of rich towns and villages. These still belong to Cathay and the Great Kaan, whose subjects they are. This is the finest country for game, whether in beasts or birds, that is anywhere to be found, and all the necessaries of life are in profusion.

At the end of those three days you find the city of PIJU, a great, rich, and noble city, with large trade and manufactures, and a great production

of silk. This city stands at the entrance to the great province of Manzi, and there reside at it a great number of merchants who despatch carts from this place loaded with great quantities of goods to the different towns of Manzi. The city brings in a great revenue to the Great Kaan.

At a sign from the president Charles paused and Fred rose to his feet.

"The cities of Chinangli and Yenchau," said Fred, "are not clearly identified, and some of the commentators think Polo has confounded one with the other, or possibly the mistake has been made by the compilers or copyists of the manuscripts. Colonel Yule thinks that the name and position of Chinangli point to Tsianfu, the principal city of the province of Shantung. The city now called Yenchau formerly bore the name of Taitingfu, which is close enough to Polo's spelling to be Tadinfu. Shantung was long noted for its produce of silk and the excellence of its fruit gardens, so that we have no fault to find with Marco's story.

"The account of the rebellion of one of the Chinese generals is substantially correct, except that the date should be 1262 instead of 1273. The Chinese histories say that all but the leaders of the rebellion were pardoned, which is not always the case in Oriental wars.

"We next find mention of what is supposed to be the Imperial Canal of China," continued Fred. "It was begun in the seventh century of our era, though some of the Chinese histories give it an earlier date, and may be said to form a continuous water-way from Peking to Canton, a distance in round figures of a thousand miles. It was greatly damaged by the Tai-ping rebels thirty years ago, and also by the overflowing of the Hoang-ho and its change of course during that war. The portion north of the Yang-tse is no longer used, and the southern part has never been restored to its former condition. Compared with some modern canals it is of no great consequence, but certainly it was the grandest work of the time when it was built."

"Do we understand," inquired one of the youths, "that the canal was dug out of the earth the whole of the way from Peking to Canton?"

"No," was the reply, "by so understanding you would not be correct. The canal connects the rivers and lakes of China in such a way as to form a line of water communication, and sometimes the rivers are utilized for long distances. The northern end of the canal is near Tientsin, ninety miles from Peking, and between Peking and Tientsin the Pei-ho River forms the communi-

Junk near the Entrance of the Imperial Canal.

cation. At the southern end the canal opens into Pearl River, which completes the route to Canton, and in various parts of the country the rivers and lakes are utilized. But even with these advantages the work of building the canal was something which reflects great credit upon those who planned and executed the enterprise.

"Sinjumatu is probably identical with Tsin-ing-Chau, Linju with Lint-Ching, and Piju with Pei-Chau. Indeed the descriptions answer to them, and the abundance of game about Pei-Chau has

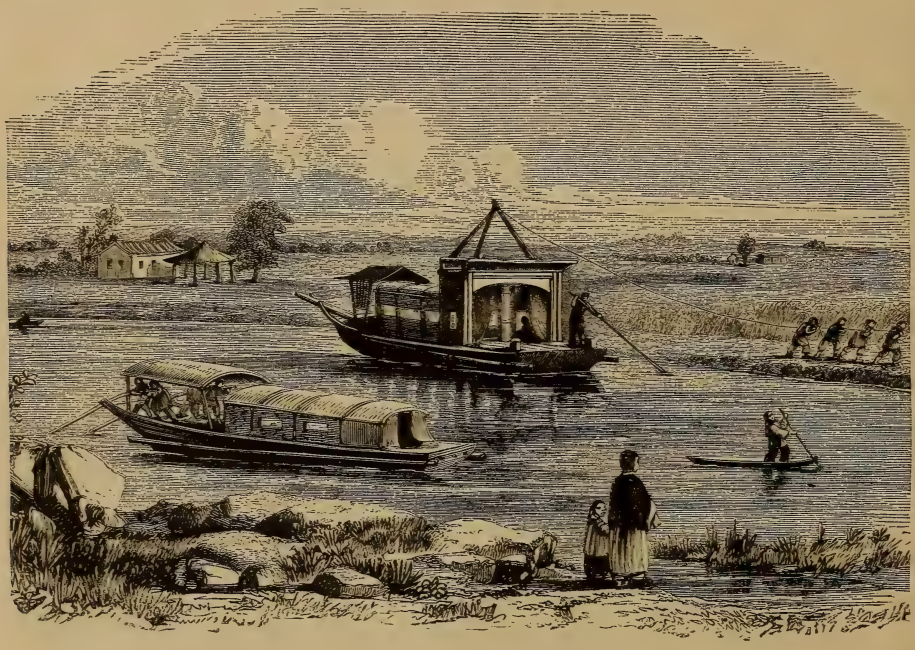
been noticed by modern visitors. It is on the east bank of the grand canal near its northern end, but has declined considerably since Polo's time. I will anticipate a little here," continued Fred, "by telling you that in what Charles is about to read, you arrive once more on the banks of the Caramoran River, or the great Hoang-ho. I mentioned a few moments ago the change in the course of this stream, which has long borne the name of 'China's

Foot-Bridge over the Grand Canal.

Sorrow,' on account of the terrible devastation it has caused. Enormous embankments were made to keep the river to its channel, but several times in the last twenty centuries it has broken out and made a new bed for itself. The most recent change was in 1853, when an immense flood broke away the embankments, covered a large area of country, drowned thousands of people, destroyed towns, villages, and farms, and caused un-

told suffering. The river left the bed it had followed for six centuries and sought a new opening into the Gulf of Pecheli. The old channel crossed by Polo is now deserted, or rather it is filled with villages and farms, so that the Venetian could not recognize the place if he should revisit the earth after his long absence."

With this anticipatory explanation Fred made way for Charles, who went on with the narrative.



View on the Grand Canal above Canton.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF SIJU, AND THE GREAT RIVER CARAMORAN.

When you leave Piju you travel toward the south for two days, through beautiful districts abounding in every thing, and in which you find quantities of all kinds of game. At the end of those two days you reach the city of SIJU, a great, rich, and noble city, flourishing with trade and manufactures. The people possess extensive and fertile plains producing abundance of wheat and other grain.

On leaving Siju you ride south for three days, constantly falling in

with fine towns and villages and hamlets and farms, with their cultivated lands. There is plenty of wheat and other corn, and of game also.

At the end of those three days you reach the great river CARAMORAN, which flows hither from Prester John's country. It is a great river, and more than a mile in width, and so deep that great ships can navigate it. It abounds in fish, and very big ones too. You must know that in this river there are some 15,000 vessels, all belonging to the Great Kaan, and kept to transport his troops to the Indian Isles whenever there may be occasion; for the sea is only one day distant from the place we are speaking of. And each of these vessels, taking one with another, will require 20 mariners, and will carry 15 horses with the men belonging to them, and their provisions, arms, and equipments.

A Chinese Soldier Exercising with Two Swords.

Hither and thither, on either bank of the river, stands a town; the one facing the other. The one is called COIGANJU and the other CAIJU; the former is a large place, and the latter a little one. And when you pass this river you enter the great province of Manzi.

HOW THE GREAT KAAN CONQUERED THE PROVINCE OF MANZI.

There was a king and sovereign lord of the great territory of Manzi who was styled FACFUR, so great and puissant a prince, that for vastness of wealth and number of subjects and extent of dominion, there was hardly a greater in all the earth except the Great Kaan himself.

In all his dominion there were no horses; nor were the people ever inured to battle or arms, or military service of any kind. Yet the province of Manzi is very strong by nature, and all the cities are encompassed by sheets of water of great depth, and more than an arblast-

shot in width; so that the country never would have been lost had the people but been soldiers. But that is just what they were not; so lost it was.

Now it came to pass, in the year 1268, that the Great Kaan, the same that now reigneth, despatched thither a Baron of his whose name was BAYAN CHINCSAN, which is as much as to say "Bayan Hundred-Eyes." And you must know that the King of Manzi had found in his horoscope that he never should lose his kingdom except through a man that had an hundred eyes; so he held himself assured in his position, for he could not believe that any man in existence could have an hundred eyes. There, however, he deluded himself, in his ignorance of the name of Bayan.

This Bayan had an immense force of horse and foot entrusted to him by the Great Kaan, and with these he entered Manzi, and he had also a great number of boats to carry both horse and foot when need should be. And when he, with all his host, entered the territory of Manzi and arrived at this city of COIGANJU—whither we now are got, and of which we shall speak presently—he summoned the people thereof to surrender to the Great Kaan; but this they flatly refused. On this Bayan went on to another city, with the same result, and then still went forward; acting thus because he was aware that the Great Kaan was despatching another great host to follow him up.

What shall I say then? He advanced to five cities in succession, but got possession of none of them; for he did not wish to engage in besieging them, and they would not give themselves up. But when he came to the sixth city he took that by storm, and so with a second, and a third, and a fourth, until he had taken twelve cities in succession. And when he had taken all these he advanced straight against the capital city of the kingdom, which was called KINSAY, and which was the residence of the King and Queen.

And when the King beheld Bayan coming with all his host, he was in great dismay, as one unused to see such sights. So he and a great company of his people got on board a thousand ships and fled to the islands of the Ocean Sea, whilst the Queen who remained behind in the city took all measures in her power for its defence, like a valiant lady.

Now it came to pass that the Queen asked what was the name of the captain of the host, and they told her that it was Bayan Hundred-Eyes. So when she wist that he was styled Hundred-Eyes, she called to mind how their astrologers had foretold that a man of an hundred eyes should strip them of the kingdom. Wherefore she gave herself up to Bayan, and surrendered to him the whole kingdom and all the other cities and fortresses, so that no resistance was made. And in sooth this was a goodly conquest, for there was no realm on earth half so wealthy. The amount that the King used to expend was perfectly marvellous; and as an example I will tell you somewhat of his liberal acts.

In those provinces they are wont to expose their new-born babes; I speak of the poor, who have not the means of bringing them up. But the King used to have all those foundlings taken charge of, and had note made of the signs and planets under which each was born, and then put them out to nurse about the country. And when any rich man was childless he would go to the King and obtain from him as many of these children as he desired. Or, when the children grew up, the King would make up marriages among them, and provide for the couples from his own purse. In this manner he used to provide for some 20,000 boys and girls every year.

I will tell you another thing this King used to do. If he was taking a ride through the city and chanced to see a house that was very small and poor standing among other houses that were fine and large, he would ask why it was so, and they would tell him it belonged to a poor man who had not the means to enlarge it. Then the King would himself supply the means. And thus it came to pass that in all the capital of the kingdom of Manzi, Kinsay by name, you should not see any but fine houses.

This King used to be waited on by more than a thousand young gentlemen and ladies, all clothed in the richest fashion. And he ruled his realm with such justice that no malefactors were to be found therein. The city in fact was so secure that no man closed his doors at night, not even in houses and shops that were full of all sorts of rich merchandize. No one could do justice in the telling to the great riches of that country, and to the good disposition of the people. Now that I have told you about the kingdom, I will go back to the Queen.

You must know that she was conducted to the Great Kaan, who gave her an honorable reception, and caused her to be served with all state, like a great lady as she was. But as for the King her husband, he never more did quit the isles of the sea to which he had fled, but died there. So leave we him and his wife and all their concerns, and let us return to our story, and go on regularly with our account of the great province of Manzi and of the manners and customs of its people. And, to begin at the beginning, we must go back to the city of Coiganju, from which we digressed to tell you about the conquest of Manzi.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF COIGANJU.

COIGANJU is, as I have told you already, a very large city standing at the entrance to Manzi. The people have a vast amount of shipping, as I mentioned before in speaking of the River Caramoran. And an immense quantity of merchandize comes hither, for the city is the seat of government for this part of the country. Owing to its being on the river, many cities send their produce thither to be again thence distributed in every direction. A great amount of salt also is made here, furnishing some forty other cities with that article, and bringing in a large revenue to the Great Kaan.

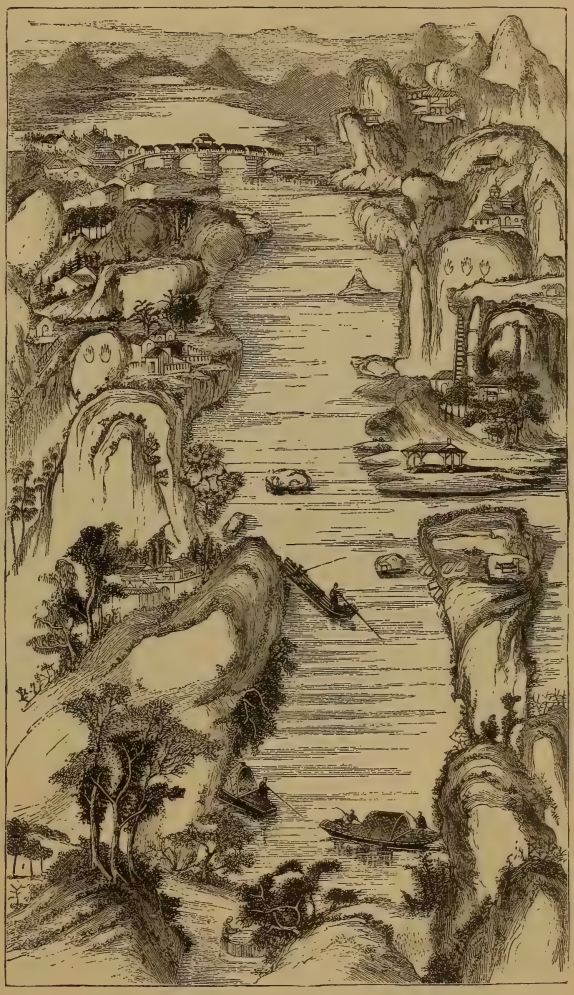
OF THE CITIES OF PAUKIN AND CAYU.

When you leave Coiganju you ride south-east for a day along a causeway laid with fine stone, which you find at this entrance to Manzi. On either hand there is a great expanse of water, so that you cannot enter the province except along this causeway. At the end of the day's journey you reach the fine city of PAUKIN. The people live by trade and manufactures and have great abundance of silk, whereof they weave a great variety of fine stuffs of silk and gold. Of all the necessaries of life there is great store.

When you leave Paukin you ride another day to the south-east, and then you arrive at the city of CAYU. The people live by trade and manufactures and have great store of all necessaries, including fish in great abundance. There is also much game, both beast and bird, insomuch that for a Venice groat you can have three good pheasants.

OF THE CITIES OF TIJU, TINJU, AND YANJU.

When you leave Cayu, you ride another day to the south-east through a constant succession of villages and fields and fine farms until you come to TIJU, which is a city of no great size but abounding in every thing. There is a great amount of trade, and they have many vessels. And you must know that on your left hand, that is toward the east, and three days' journey distant, is the Ocean Sea. At every place between the sea and the city salt is made in great quantities. And there is a rich and noble city called TINJU, at which there is produced salt enough to supply the whole province, and I can tell you it brings the Great Kaan an incredible revenue.



River Landscape. (From a Chinese Drawing.)

Again, leaving Tiju, you ride another day towards the south-east, and at the end of your journey you arrive at the very great and noble city of YANJU, which has seven-and-twenty other wealthy cities under its administration; so that this Yanju is, you see, a city of great importance. It is the seat of one of the Great Kaan's Twelve Barons, for it has been chosen to be one of the Twelve *Sings*. And Messer Marco Polo himself,

of whom this book speaks, did govern this city for three full years, by the order of the Great Kaan. The people live by trade and manufactures, for a great amount of harness for knights and men-at-arms is made there. And in this city and its neighborhood a large number of troops are stationed by the Kaan's orders.

Now I will tell you about two great provinces of Manzi which lie towards the west. And first of that called Nanghin.

View on the Min River, near Foo-Chow.

"There is, no doubt, some confusion in your minds," said Fred as soon as Charles paused, "concerning the province of Manzi, which was conquered by the Great Khan. We have already spoken of the Manzi, a wild tribe on the upper waters of the Yang-tse-Kiang, but the present reference is to quite another people. *Mantzu* or *Mantze* means 'barbarians,' or 'sons of barbarians,' and was applied to the people of Southern China by the Northern Chinese, who claimed to have the superior civilization. The name is retained in Manjouria, where the Chinese

immigrants are called *Mantszi*, and it is said to have descended from the time of Kublai Khan.

"In the description of the conquest which Charles has just read we have the story of the subjugation of Southern China by the Mongols. Facfur or Fagfur was a name applied by old Persian writers to the Emperor of China; it is a near translation of the Chinese appellation for their sovereign, 'The Son of Heaven,' as *Fag-Fur* means 'Son of the Divinity.' Bayan signifies 'great' or 'noble,' but Bayan Chincsan cannot be translated into 'Baron Hundred-Eyes,' as Polo gives it. The Chinese equivalent of Bayan is *Pe-yen*, and this might be rendered into 'Hundred-Eyes' by means of a trifling pun. The story is a pretty one, and reminds us of the prophecy of the witches to Macbeth about Birnam Wood coming to Dunsinane before he should be conquered."

"And it is also a reminder," interrupted the doctor, "of the story of Captain Scott's encounter with the coon.

"The elders of the audience are probably familiar with the incident, but it may be new to some of the juveniles. Captain Scott was a famous hunter in the West, and had the reputation of being an unerring shot with the rifle.

"One day he was out hunting in the woods, and saw a coon among the limbs of a tree. As he raised his rifle to fire, the animal called out:

"'Hold on there; are you Captain Scott?'

"'Yes,' said the captain, 'I am.'

"'Well then, don't shoot,' said the coon, 'I 'll come down at once.'"

There was a hearty laugh all around at this anecdote, and when it was over the doctor said: "'I 'll come right down, like Captain Scott's coon,' had passed into a proverb, but is now somewhat out of date."

"And did the coon really come down?" inquired one of the younger members of the Society.

"History is silent on that point," replied the doctor, "and we

are left in doubt concerning it. The story always stops with the offer to descend."

There was another laugh, and it was quite as hearty as the first. The literal-minded youth blushed and had no more questions to ask. Fred continued his comments upon the conquest of Manzi, by saying that "while the story might be regarded as generally correct, it was full of errors of detail. The emperor was only four years old at the time of Bayan's advance; the empress regent surrendered without opposition, and was carried with her young son to Kublai's capital.

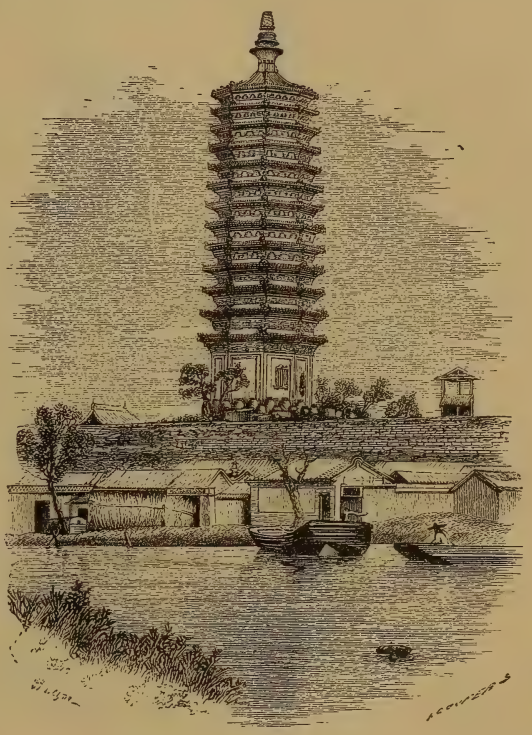
"You observe what Polo says about the exposure of infants in China. Dr. Doolittle and other writers say that the practice is still prevalent, though many Chinese and some foreigners deny it. The infants exposed are almost invariably girls, and the children of poor people. Boys are rarely disposed of in this way, as they are considered a valuable addition to a family. Dr. Doolittle says that every year great numbers of infant girls are destroyed by their parents to save the expense of rearing them; in Foo-Chow he was told by intelligent Chinese that about half the families in that city destroy their female children with the exception of one or two! The same was the case in the country districts around Foo-Chow and in other parts of Southern China."

Countrywoman of Foo-Chow.

"But does not the Government punish those wicked people who kill their children?" one of the audience inquired.

"Very little attention is paid to the matter by the Government," Fred answered, "though there is a pretence of preventing infanticide. Dr. Doolittle says no measures are ever taken to

find out and punish the murderers of their own infants. The practice is not sanctioned by the Government, and occasional proclamations are issued against it, but it is tolerated and acquiesced in by the mandarins and all the lower officials. The educated classes in China have made public remonstrances against it, and the teachings of the missionaries have done a great deal of good, but there is yet a chance for a vast improvement in the moral tone of the poor people of the country."



Pagoda at Tung-Chow.

"We will briefly dispose of the cities mentoned by Polo. Coiganju is the modern Hwai-ngan-Chau, and salt is still made there; Paukin is Pao-Yng; Cayu is Kao-Yu; Tiju is Tai-Chau; Tinju is Tung-Chow, and Yanju is Yung-Chow. The latter is one of the oldest and most famous great cities of China; it suffered greatly in the Taiping rebellion, but is rapidly recovering in consequence of its important commercial position. Tung-Chow may be called the port of Peking, as it is there the navigation of the Pei-ho River comes to an end. It is twelve miles from Tung-Chow to the capital; boats may go through the canal to the walls of the city, but travellers generally leave their water conveyance at Tung-Chow, and proceed on horseback or in sedan chairs.

"Our usual allowance of time has expired," said Fred, glancing

at the clock, "and I presume Charles is willing to postpone further reading until the next meeting, when you will learn something about Nanghin."

The usual motions for closing the session were made, and in a very few moments the hum of busy conversation through the room told very plainly that all formal business was over.

An Oriental Maid-Servant.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Yang-tse-Kiang and Cities along its Banks—Navigation of the Great River of China—Enormous Fleets of Boats—Artillery before the Invention of Gunpowder—Various Machines for Hurling Stones and Other Projectiles—The Great City of Kinsay—An Animated Picture—The Capital of Southern China Six Centuries Ago.

At the next meeting Frank was present in the audience, but, though his voice had greatly improved, he declined to read, and requested Charles to continue to act in his stead. The latter hesitated for a while, but his scruples were soon overcome; probably the commendations he received upon his first attempt had something to do with the promptness of his decision. He had taken the precaution to go carefully over the part of the narrative that would come up for consideration, and therefore was not unprepared. As soon as the meeting was called to order and quiet had been secured he opened the book and read, as had been promised, the account of Nanghin and other cities.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF NANGHIN.

Nanghin is a very noble Province towards the west. The people have silk in great abundance, and they weave many fine tissues of silk and gold. They have all sorts of corn and victuals very cheap, for the province is a most productive one. Game also is abundant, and lions too are found there. The merchants are great and opulent, and the Emperor draws a large revenue from them, in the shape of duties on the goods which they buy and sell.

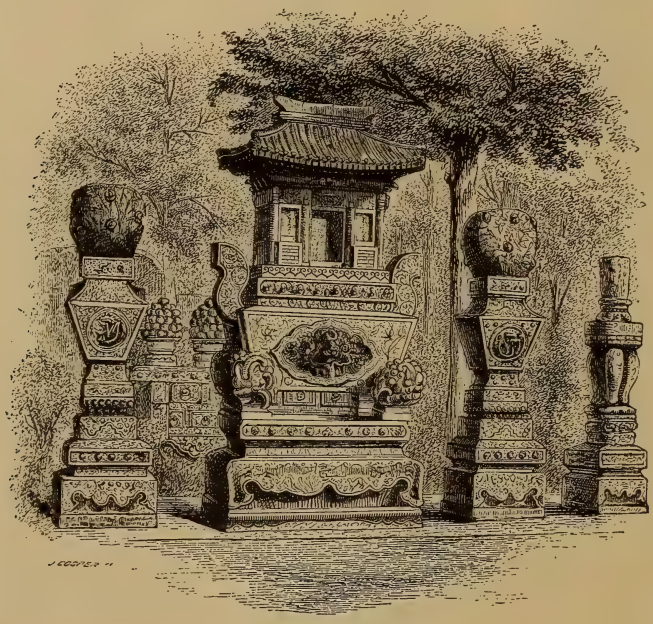
And now I will tell you of the very noble city of Saianfu, which well deserves a place in our book, for there is a matter of great moment to tell about it.

CONCERNING THE VERY NOBLE CITY OF SAIANFU, AND HOW ITS CAPTURE WAS EFFECTED.

Saianfu is a very great and noble city, and it rules over twelve other large and rich cities, and is itself a seat of great trade and manufacture.

Now you must know that this city held out against the Great Kaan for three years after the rest of Manzi had surrendered. The Great Kaan's troops made incessant attempts to take it, but they could not succeed because of the great and deep waters that were round about it, so that they could approach from one side only, which was the north. And I tell you they never would have taken it, but for a circumstance that I am going to relate.

You must know that when the Great Kaan's host had lain three years before the city without being able to take it, they were greatly chafed



Ancient Chinese Tomb.

thereat. Then Messer Nicolo Polo and Messer Maffeo and Messer Marco said: "We could find you a way of forcing the city to surrender speedily;" whereupon those of the army replied, that they would be right glad to know how that should be. All this talk took place in the presence of the Great Kaan. For messengers had been despatched from the camp to tell him that there was no taking the city by blockade, for it continually received supplies of victual from those sides which they were unable to invest; and the Great Kaan had sent back word that take it they

must, and find a way how. Then spoke up the two brothers and Messer Marco, the son, and said: "Great Prince, we have with us among our followers men who are able to construct mangonels which shall cast such great stones that the garrison will never be able to stand them, but will surrender incontinently, as soon as the mangonels or trebuchets shall have shot into the town."

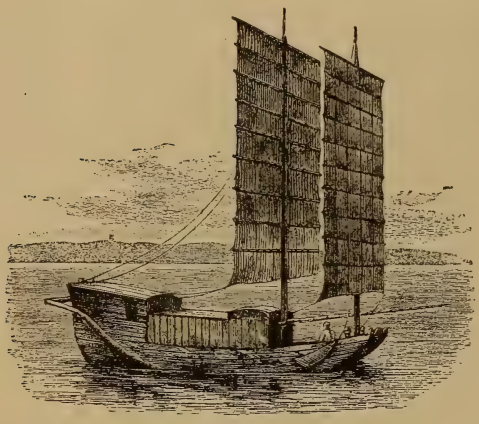
The Kaan bade them with all his heart have such mangonels made as speedily as possible. Now Messer Nicolo and his brother and his son immediately caused timber to be brought, as much as they desired, and fit for the work in hand. And they had two men among their followers, a German and a Nestorian Christian, who were masters of that business, and these they directed to construct two or three mangonels capable of casting stones of 300 lbs. weight. Accordingly they made three fine mangonels, each of which cast stones of 300 lbs. weight and more. And when they were complete and ready for use, the Emperor and the others were greatly pleased to see them, and caused several stones to be shot in their presence; whereat they marvelled greatly and greatly praised the work. And the Kaan ordered that the engines should be carried to his army which was at the leaguer of Saianfu.

And when the engines were got to the camp they were forthwith set up, to the great admiration of the Tartars. And what shall I tell you? When the engines were set up and put in gear, a stone was shot from each of them into the town. These took effect among the buildings, crashing and smashing through every thing with huge din and commotion. And when the townspeople witnessed this new and strange visitation they were so astonished and dismayed that they wist not what to do or say. They took counsel together, but no counsel could be suggested how to escape from these engines, for the thing seemed to them to be done by sorcery. They declared that they were all dead men if they yielded not, so they determined to surrender on such conditions as they could get.

So the men of the city surrendered, and were received to terms; and this all came about through the exertions of Messer Nicolo, and Messer Maffeo, and Messer Marco; and it was no small matter. For this city and province is one of the best that the Great Kaan possesses, and brings him in great revenues.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF SINJU AND THE GREAT RIVER KIAN.

When you leave the city of Yanju, after going 15 miles south-east, you come to a city called SINJU, of no great size, but possessing a very great amount of shipping and trade. It stands on the greatest river in the world, the name of which is KIAN. It is in some places ten miles wide, in others eight, in others six, and it is more than 100 days' journey in length from one end to the other. This it is that brings so much trade to the city we are speaking of; for on the waters of that river merchandize is perpetually coming and going, from and to the various parts of the world, enriching the city, and bringing a great revenue to the Great Kaan.



Traveller's Boat on Upper Part of the Yang-tse.

And I assure you this river flows so far and traverses so many countries and cities that in good sooth there pass and repass on its waters a great number of vessels, and more wealth and merchandize than on all the rivers and all the seas of Christendom put together! It seems indeed more like a Sea than a River. Messer Marco Polo said that he once beheld at that city 15,000 vessels at one time. And you may judge, if this city, of no great size, has such a number, how many must there be altogether, considering that on the banks of this river there are more than sixteen provinces and more than 200 great cities, besides towns and villages, all possessing vessels?

Messer Marco Polo aforesaid tells us that he heard from the officer employed to collect the Great Kaan's duties on this river that there passed up-stream 200,000 vessels in the year, without counting those that passed down! Indeed as it has a course of such great length, and receives so many other navigable rivers, it is no wonder that the merchandize which is borne on it is of vast amount and value. And the article in largest

quantity of all is salt, which is carried by this river and its branches to all the cities on their banks, and thence to the other cities in the interior.

The vessels which ply on this river are decked. They have but one mast, but they are of great burthen, for I can assure you they carry, reckoning by our weight, from 4000 to 12,000 cantars each. In going up-stream they have to be tracked, for the current is so strong that they could not make head in any other manner. Now the tow-line, which is some 300 paces in length, is made of nothing but cane. 'T is in this way: they have those great canes of which I told you before that they are some fifteen paces in length; these they take and split from end to end into many slender strips, and then they twist these strips together so as to make a rope of any length they please. And the ropes so made are stronger than if they were made of hemp.

There are at many places on this river hills and rocky eminences on which the idol-monasteries and other edifices are built; and you find on its shores a constant succession of villages and inhabited places.

"The great and noble city of Saianfu," said Fred, "is the modern Siangyangfu on the south bank of the river Han and opposite to Fanching. It was captured by Kublai Khan in Polo's time, but according to the Chinese historians the date of its reduction was previous to Marco's arrival in the emperor's dominions. It may be that the engines in question were made under the direction of Marco's father and uncle, or perhaps the Chinese date is wrong and our hero actually took part in the capture. And if he was not there in person he is not the only military man who has claimed a part in a siege with which he had nothing to do.

"The *mangonels*, that cast stones weighing three hundred pounds each, were the artillery in use before the invention of gunpowder; they were common enough in Europe and among the Saracens, and some forms of them had already been employed by the Chinese. The Greeks and Romans had engines of this sort, and the ingenuity of men seems to have been devoted to the invention of powerful machines for destroying the

walls of cities, or throwing missiles into an enemy's camp, or a besieged place, just as it is now directed to the construction of weapons in which gunpowder or other explosives are the active agents. The best known of these engines were the *balista*, *catapult*, *arbaleste*, *scorpion*, and *onager*. They depended for their propulsive force upon the elasticity of wood or metals, upon men pulling at ropes, or on heavy weights placed at the ends of levers. The subject is interesting for some of the

Mediæval Artillery. Figs. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Chinese ; 6, 7, 8, Saracenic ; the rest Frank.

audience, but not for all ; I will show you at the close of our evening's entertainment the drawings of some of these machines, and you may then study them at your leisure. They will be found in most of the encyclopedias, and if you wish further information about them I am sure Dr. Allen can refer you to special books on the subject."

True to his promise Fred exhibited, immediately after the adjournment of the meeting, the drawings of the machines in question. He further explained that the most powerful of them

were far less effective than the most ordinary cannon, and that it is no wonder they all became obsolete as soon as gunpowder came into use.

"We will leave the siege and its military engines," said Fred, "and come to the city of Sinju and the great river Kian. The city is the modern I-Chin and the river the Yang-tse-Kiang. You may think Marco exaggerates when he calls it the greatest river of the world, but bear in mind that America was not then discovered and the Mississippi and Amazon were unknown. It was the greatest known river in Polo's day, and while he shoots above the mark in speaking of its width he is within bounds about its length. Its Chinese name means 'Ocean River,' and the Mongols call it '*Dalai*,' or 'The Sea.' The Chinese have a proverb: '*Hai vu ping, Kiang vu ti*';—possibly some of you may not understand the language thoroughly, and I will explain that it means 'Boundless is the Ocean, bottomless the Kiang!'

"As to the commerce of the great river, I don't think Marco has overstated the case, nor would any of you if you should make the voyage from Shanghai to Hankow and back again on one of the great steamers now running there. Perhaps Dr. Allen will tell us about it."

"I have been on a great many rivers of the world," said the doctor in response to the request, "and have never seen anywhere half as many boats in a single day as on the Yang-tse. From the time you leave Shanghai till you reach Hankow there are dozens and sometimes hundreds of them constantly in sight, and at all the towns and cities they are tied up to the bank for a long distance, three or four of them against each other. At Hankow there is a front on the two rivers—the Yang-tse and the Han—of five or six miles, and all this distance was lined with boats.

"Most of you have seen Boston or New York bay in a pleasant afternoon in summer when all boats that could sail were out for an airing. Well, imagine this great river for hundreds of miles dotted with sails as thickly as are those bays at the time I

speak of, and you can form an idea of the native commerce on the Yang-tse. No census of the boats is ever taken, and consequently nobody knows their number. I asked a Chinese merchant who was a fellow-traveller with me on the steamer, how many boats were engaged in navigating the Yang-tse and its tributaries, and the only answer I received was :

Boat Used by Officials and Their Families.

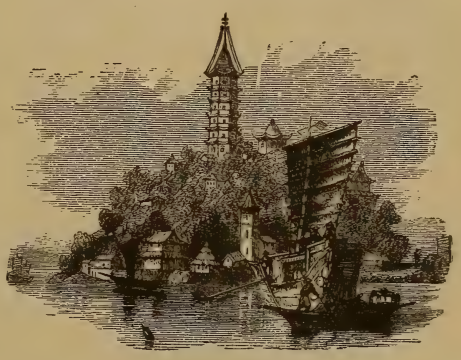
" 'P'raps hunder tousand, p'raps million ; nobody don't know.' Another said : 'Great many big million,' and though his statement is indefinite it may not be far out of the way.

"The bamboo ropes which Polo mentions are not used for towing to the extent he describes, and you are more likely to see them on the canals than on the rivers. But they make ropes of bamboo as in his day ; all along the river you see scaffolds, thirty or forty feet high, with a man working on the top. He carries the strips of bamboo to the scaffold and

then braids them into a rope, which hangs down with its own weight and coils on the ground below."

The doctor sat down and Fred called Charles to his feet with the explanation that he had nothing to add to what they had heard about the great river of China. "With this exception," he continued, "that the island monasteries still exist, but the towns and villages are less numerous than formerly, owing to the ravages of the Taiping rebels and their imperial conquerors. Frequently the imperialists destroyed what the rebels had left, and between the armies of both the people suffered terribly."

Before resuming his reading Charles announced that the next chapter contained a more detailed reference to the grand canal than the one already noticed. Caiju, he said, was the modern Kwachau at the entrance to the northern section of the Imperial Canal from the Yang-tse. The island monastery opposite Kwachau is the famous Golden Island, which remains a vivid picture in the memory of every traveller on the great river.



Golden Island.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF CAIJU.

CAIJU is a small city towards the south-east and stands upon the river before mentioned. At this place are collected great quantities of corn and rice to be transported to the great city of Cambaluc for the use of the Kaan's Court; for the grain for the Court all comes from this part of the country. The Emperor hath caused a water-communication to be made from this city to Cambaluc, in the shape of a wide and deep channel dug between stream and stream, between lake and lake, forming as it were a great river on which large vessels can ply. And thus there is a communication all the way from this city of Caiju to Cambaluc; so that great vessels with their loads can go the whole way. A land road also exists,

for the earth dug from those channels has been thrown up so as to form an embanked road on either side.

Just opposite to the city of Caiju, in the middle of the river, there stands a rocky island on which there is an idol-monastery containing some 200 idolatrous friars, and a vast number of idols. And this Abbey holds supremacy over a number of other idol-monasteries, just like an archbishop's see among Christians.

Now we will leave this and cross the river, and I will tell you of a city called Chinghianfu.

OF THE CITY OF CHINGHIANFU.

CHINGHIANFU is a city of Manzi. The people live by handicrafts and trade, and have plenty of silk, from which they make sundry kinds of stuffs of silk and gold. There are great and wealthy merchants in the place; plenty of game is to be had, and of all kinds of victual.

Little Orphan Rock in Yang-Tse.

There are in this city two churches of Nestorian Christians which were established in the year 1278; and I will tell you how that happened. You see in the year just named, the Great Kaan sent a Baron of his whose name was MAR SARGHIS, a Nestorian Christian, to be governor of this city for three years. And during the three years that he abode there he caused these two Christian churches to be built, and since then there they are. But before his time there was no church, neither were there any Christians.

OF THE CITY OF CHINGINJU AND THE SLAUGHTER OF CERTAIN ALANS THERE.

Leaving the city of Chinghianfu and travelling three days south-east through a constant succession of busy and thriving towns and villages, you arrive at the great and noble city of CHINGINJU. The people live by trade and handicrafts, and have plenty of silk. They have also abun-

dance of game, and of all manner of victuals, for it is a most productive territory.

Now I must tell you of an evil deed that was done, once upon a time, by the people of this city, and how dearly they paid for it.

You see, at the time of the conquest of the great province of Manzi, when Bayan was in command, he sent a company of his troops, consisting of a people called Alans, who are Christians, to take this city. They took it accordingly, and when they had made their way in, they lighted upon some good wine. Of this they drank until they were all drunk, and then they lay down and slept soundly. When night fell, the townspeople fell upon them and slew them all; not a man escaped.

And when Bayan heard that the townspeople had thus treacherously slain his men, he sent another Admiral of his with a great force, and stormed the city, and put the whole of the inhabitants to the sword; not a man of them escaped death. And thus the whole population of that city was exterminated.

OF THE NOBLE CITY OF SUJU.

SUJU is a very great and noble city, and has a circuit of some 60 miles; it hath merchants of great wealth and an incalculable number of people. Indeed, if the men of this city and of the rest of Manzi had but the spirit of soldiers they would conquer the world; but they are no soldiers at all, only accomplished traders and most skilful craftsmen. There are also in this city many philosophers and leeches, diligent students of nature.

And you must know that in this city there are 6000 bridges, all of stone, and so lofty that a galley, or even two galleys at once, could pass underneath one of them.

In the mountains belonging to this city, rhubarb and ginger grow in great abundance; insomuch that you may get some 40 pounds of excellent fresh ginger for a Venice groat. And the city has sixteen other great trading cities under its rule. The name of the city, Suju, signifies in our tongue, "Earth," and that of another near it, of which we shall speak presently, called Kinsay, signifies "Heaven"; and these names are given because of the great splendor of the two cities.

Now let us quit Suju, and go on to another which is called VUJU, one day's journey distant; it is a great and fine city, rife with trade and manufactures. But as there is nothing more to say of it we shall go on and I will tell you of another great and noble city called VUGHIN. The people possess much silk and other merchandize, and they are expert traders and craftsmen. Let us now quit Vughin and tell you of another city called CHANGAN, a great and rich place. The people make great quantities of sendal of different kinds, and they have much game in the neighborhood.

DESCRIPTION OF THE GREAT CITY OF KINSAY, WHICH IS THE CAPITAL OF THE WHOLE COUNTRY OF MANZI.

When you have left the city of Changan and have travelled for three days through a splendid country, passing a number of towns and villages, you arrive at the most noble city of KINSAY, a name which is as much as to say in our tongue, "The City of Heaven," as I told you before.

Silver Island, Yang-tse-Kiang.

And since we have got thither I will enter into particulars about its magnificence; and these are well worth the telling, for the city is beyond dispute the finest and the noblest in the world. In this we shall speak according to the written statement which the Queen of this Realm sent to Bayan the conqueror of the country for transmission to the Great Kaan, in order that he might be aware of the surpassing grandeur of the city and might be moved to save it from destruction or injury. I will tell you all the truth as it was set down in that document. For truth it was, as the said Messer Marco Polo at a later date was able to witness with his own eyes. And now we shall rehearse those particulars.

First and foremost, then, the document stated the city of Kinsay to be so great that it hath an hundred miles of compass. And there are in it twelve thousand bridges of stone, for the most part so lofty that a

great fleet could pass beneath them. And let no man marvel that there are so many bridges, for you see the whole city stands as it were in the water and surrounded by water, so that a great many bridges are required to give free passage about it. And though the bridges be so high the approaches are so well contrived that carts and horses do cross them.

The document aforesaid also went on to state that there were in this city twelve guilds of the different crafts, and that each guild had 12,000 houses in the occupation of its workmen. Each of these houses contains at least 12 men, whilst some contain 20 and some 40,—not that these are all masters, but inclusive of the journeymen who work under the masters.

Men Working at their Trades.

And yet all of these craftsmen had full occupation, for many other cities of the kingdom are supplied from this city with what they require.

The document aforesaid also stated that the number and wealth of the merchants, and the amount of goods that passed through their hands, were so enormous that no man could form a just estimate thereof. And I should have told you with regard to those masters of the different crafts who are at the head of such houses as I have mentioned, that neither they nor their wives ever touch a piece of work with their own hands, but live as nicely and delicately as if they were kings and queens. The wives indeed are most dainty and angelical creatures! Moreover it was

an ordinance laid down by the King that every man should follow his father's business and no other, no matter if he possessed 100,000 bezants.

Inside the city there is a lake which has a compass of some 30 miles; and all round it are erected beautiful palaces and mansions, of the richest and most exquisite structure that you can imagine, belonging to the nobles of the city. There are also on its shores many abbeys and churches of the Idolaters. In the middle of the Lake are two Islands, on each of which stands a rich, beautiful, and spacious edifice, furnished in such style as to seem fit for the palace of an Emperor. And when any one of the citizens desired to hold a marriage feast, or to give any other entertainment, it used to be done at one of these palaces. And every thing would be found there ready to order, such as silver plate, trenchers, and dishes, napkins and table-cloths, and whatever else was needful. The King made this provision for the gratification of his people, and the place was open to every one who desired to give an entertainment. Sometimes there would be at these palaces an hundred different parties; some holding a banquet, others celebrating a wedding; and yet all would find good accommodation in the different apartments and pavilions, and that in so well ordered a manner that one party was never in the way of another.

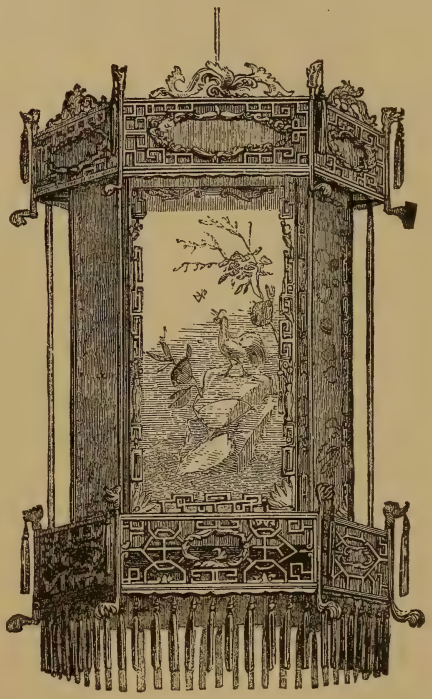
The houses of the city are provided with lofty towers of stone in which articles of value are stored for fear of fire; for most of the houses themselves are of timber, and fires are very frequent in the city.

The people are Idolaters; and since they were conquered by the Great Kaan they use paper-money. Both men and women are fair and comely, and for the most part clothe themselves in silk, so vast is the supply of that material, both from the whole district of Kinsay, and from the imports by traders from other provinces. And you must know they eat every kind of flesh, even that of dogs and other unclean beasts, which nothing would induce a Christian to eat.

Since the Great Kaan occupied the city he has ordained that each of the 12,000 bridges should be provided with a guard of ten men, in case of any disturbance, or of any being so rash as to plot treason or insurrection against him. Each guard is provided with a hollow instrument of wood and with a metal basin, and with a time-keeper to enable them to know the hour of the day or night. And so when one hour of the night

is past the sentry strikes one on the wooden instrument and on the basin, so that the whole quarter of the city is made aware that one hour of the night is gone. At the second hour he gives two strokes, and so on, keeping always wide awake and on the look out. In the morning again, from the sunrise, they begin to count anew, and strike one hour as they did in the night, and so on hour after hour.

Part of the watch patrols the quarter, to see if any light or fire is burning after the lawful hours; if they find any they mark the door, and in the morning the owner is summoned before the magistrates, and unless he can plead a good excuse he is punished. Also if they find any one going about the streets at unlawful hours they arrest him, and in the morning they bring him before the magistrates. Likewise if in the day time they find any poor cripple unable to work for his livelihood, they take him to one of the hospitals, of which there are many, founded by the ancient kings, and endowed with great revenues. Or if he be capable of work they oblige him to take up some trade. If they see that any house has caught fire they immediately beat upon that wooden instrument to give the alarm, and this brings together the watchmen from the other bridges to help to extinguish it, and to save the goods of the merchant or others, either by removing them to the towers above mentioned, or by putting them in boats and transporting them to the islands in the lake. For no citizen dares leave his house at night, or to come near the fire; only those who own the property, and those watchmen who flock to help, of whom there shall come one or two thousand at the least.



Lantern from Hangchau.

Moreover, within the city there is an eminence on which stands a

Tower, and at the top of the tower is hung a slab of wood. Whenever fire or any other alarm breaks out in the city a man who stands there with a mallet in his hand beats upon the slab, making a noise that is heard to a great distance. So when the blows upon this slab are heard, everybody is aware that fire has broken out, or that there is some other cause of alarm.

The Kaan watches this city with especial diligence, because it forms the head of all Manzi; and because he has an immense revenue from the duties levied on the transactions of trade therein, the amount of which is such that no one would credit it on mere hearsay.

All the streets of the city are paved with stone or brick, as indeed are all the highways throughout Manzi, so that you ride and travel in every direction without inconvenience. Were it not for this pavement you could not do so, for the country is very low and flat, and after rain 't is deep in mire and water. But as the Great Kaan's couriers could not gallop their horses over the pavement, the side of the road is left unpaved for their convenience. The pavement of the main street of the city also is laid out in two parallel ways of ten paces in width on either side, leaving a space in the middle laid with fine gravel, under which are vaulted drains which convey the rain water into the canals; and thus the road is kept ever dry.

You must know also that the city of Kinsay has some 3000 baths, the water of which is supplied by springs. They are hot baths, and the people take great delight in them, frequenting them several times a month, for they are very cleanly in their persons. They are the finest and largest baths in the world; large enough for 100 persons to bathe together.

And the Ocean Sea comes within 25 miles of the city at a place called GANFU, where there is a town and an excellent haven, with a vast amount of shipping which is engaged in the traffic to and from India and other foreign parts, exporting and importing many kinds of wares, by which the city benefits. And a great river flows from the city of Kinsay to that sea haven, by which vessels can come up to the city itself. This river extends also to other places further inland.

Know also that the Great Kaan hath distributed the territory of

Manzi into nine parts, which he hath constituted into nine kingdoms. To each of these kingdoms a king is appointed who is subordinate to the Great Kaan, and every year renders the accounts of his kingdom to the fiscal office at the capital. This city of Kinsay is the seat of one of these kings, who rules over 140 great and wealthy cities. For in the whole of this vast country of Manzi there are more than 1200 great and wealthy cities, without counting the towns and villages, which are in great numbers. And you may receive it for certain that in each of those 1200 cities the Great Kaan has a garrison, and that the smallest of such garrisons musters 1000 men; whilst there are some of 10,000, 20,000 and 30,000; so that the total number of troops is something scarcely calculable. The troops forming these garrisons are not all Tartars. Many are from the province of Cathay, and good soldiers too. But you must not suppose they are by any means all of them cavalry; a very large proportion of them are foot-soldiers, according to the special requirements of each city. And all of them belong to the army of the Great Kaan.

I repeat that every thing appertaining to this city is on so vast a scale, and the Great Kaan's yearly revenues therefrom are so immense, that it is not easy even to put it in writing, and it seems past belief to one who merely hears it told. But I *will* write it down for you.

First, however, I must mention another thing. The people of this country have a custom, that as soon as a child is born they write down the day and hour and the planet and sign under which its birth has taken place; so that every one among them knows the day of his birth. And when any one intends a journey, he goes to the astrologers and gives the particulars of his nativity, in order to learn whether he shall have good luck or no. Sometimes they will say *no*, and in that case the journey is put off till such day as the astrologer may recommend. These astrologers are very skilful at their business, and often their words come to pass, so the people have great faith in them.

They burn the bodies of the dead. And when any one dies the friends and relations make a great mourning for the deceased, and clothe themselves in hempen garments, and follow the corpse, playing on a variety of instruments and singing hymns to their idols. And when they come to the burning place, they take representations of things cut out of

parchment, such as caparisoned horses, male and female slaves, camels, armor, suits of cloth of gold (and money), in great quantities, and these things they put on the fire along with the corpse, so that they are all burnt with it. And they tell you that the dead man shall have all these slaves and animals of which the effigies are burnt, alive in flesh and blood, and the money in gold, at his disposal in the next world; and that the instruments which they have caused to be played at his funeral, and the idol hymns that have been chanted, shall also be produced again to welcome him in the next world; and that the idols themselves will come to do him honor.

Furthermore, there exists in this city the palace of the king who fled, him who was Emperor of Manzi, and that is the greatest palace in the world, as I shall tell you more particularly. For you must know its demesne hath a compass of ten miles, all enclosed with lofty battlemented walls; and inside the walls are the finest and most delectable gardens upon earth, and filled too with the finest fruits. There are numerous fountains in it also, and lakes full of fish. In the middle is the palace itself, a great and splendid building. It contains 20 great and handsome halls, one of which is more spacious than the rest, and affords room for a vast multitude to dine. It is all painted in gold, with many histories and representations of beasts and birds, of knights and dames, and many marvellous things. It forms a really magnificent spectacle, for over all the walls and all the ceiling you see nothing but paintings in gold. And besides these halls the palace contains 1000 large and handsome chambers, all painted in gold and divers colors.

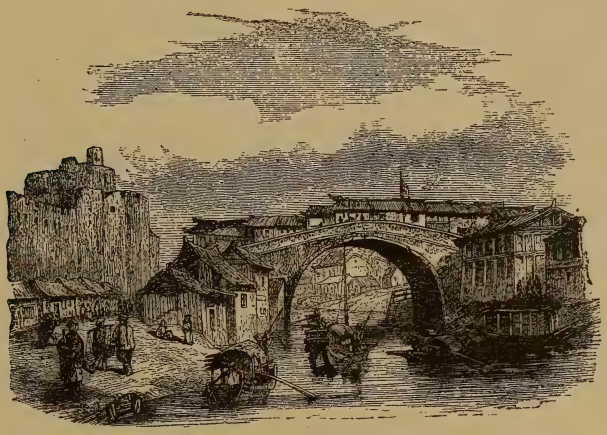
Moreover, I must tell you that in this city there are 160 *tomans* of fires, or in other words 160 *tomans* of houses. Now I should tell you that the *toman* is 10,000, so that you can reckon the total as altogether 1,600,000 houses, among which are a great number of rich palaces. There is one church only, belonging to the Nestorian Christians.

There is another thing I must tell you. It is the custom for every burgess of this city, and in fact for every description of person in it, to write over his door his own name, the name of his wife, and those of his children, his slaves, and all the inmates of his house, and also the number of animals that he keeps. And if any one dies in the house then the

name of that person is erased, and if any child is born its name is added. So in this way the sovereign is able to know exactly the population of the city. And this is the practice also throughout all Manzi and Cathay.

And I must tell you that every hosteler who keeps an hostel for travellers is bound to register their names and surnames, as well as the day and month of their arrival and departure. And thus the sovereign hath the means of knowing, whenever it pleases him, who come and go throughout his dominions. And certes this a wise order and a provident.

"Chingiangfu has retained its name unchanged," said Fred, as soon as Charles paused in his reading, "except that it is now



West Gate of Chinkiangfu in 1842.

written Chinkiangfu. It is on the southern bank of the Yang-tse, and was entirely destroyed by the Taiping rebels, but it has been rebuilt, and is improving rapidly. In the war between England and China, in 1842, it was the scene of an incident illustrative of Chinese character. On the day of its capture by the English army, the commander of the garrison seated himself among his records in his office, and then ordered the building to be set on fire. He was burned along with his documents."

One of Fred's auditors wished to know why was the city called Chinkiang-Fu, when it was named Chin-Kiang on the map of China.

"I ought to have explained before," was the reply, "that *Fu* is an official designation, and not a distinctive part of the name of a place. It is something like the way we designate New York City from New York State, though not exactly so. Perhaps the best way of making this clear to you is to read an extract from the Chinese Repository, defining the official divisions of the Chinese empire."

Fred took a volume from one of the shelves of Dr. Allen's library and read as follows :

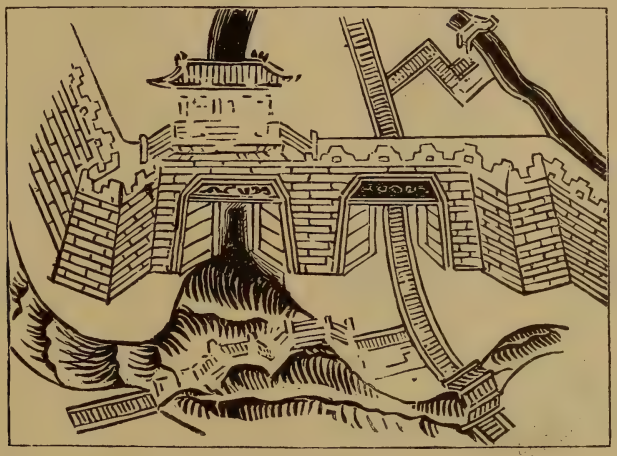
"The eighteen provinces of China are divided into *Fu*, *Ting*, *Chau*, and *Hien*. A *Fu* is a large portion or department of a province, under the general control of one civil officer immediately subordinate to the heads of the providcial government. A *Ting* is a division of a province smaller than a *Fu*, and either, like it, governed by an officer immediately subject to the heads of the provincial government, or else forming a subordinate part of a *Fu*. In the former case it is called *Chih-Li*, meaning under the 'direct rule' of the provincial government ; in the latter case it is simply called *Ting*. A *Chau* is a division similar to a *Ting*, and, like it, either independent of any other division, or forming part of a *Fu*. The difference between the two consists in the government of a *Ting* resembling that of a *Fu* more nearly than a *Chau* does ; that of the *Chau* is less expensive. The *Ting* and *Chau* may be denominated, in common with the *Fu*, departments or prefectures ; and the term *Chih-Li* may be rendered by the word 'independent.' The subordinate *Ting* and *Chau* may both be called districts. A *Hien*, which is also a district, is a small division or subordinate part of a department, whether of a *Fu*, or of an independent *Chau* or *Ting*.

"Each *Fu*, *Ting*, *Chau*, and *Hien* possesses at least one walled town, the seat of its government, which bears the same name as the department or district to which it pertains. By European writers the chief towns of the *Fu*, or departments, have been called cities of the first order ; those of the *Chau*, cities of the second order ; and those of the *Hien*, cities of the third order.

"Where you see the syllable *Fu* added to the name of a city, you may know that it is the chief town of a department," said Fred, as he closed the book and returned it to its place. "Chin-Kiang-Fu is the chief town of the district bearing that

name, and you will see by the map that it is in the province of Kiang-Su.

"Chinginju, which Polo mentions in the next chapter," continued the youth, "is the modern Chang-Chau, but unhappily his description does not apply to the surrounding region as we see it to-day, It was devastated by the Taipings, and there are miles and miles of country, once densely populated and producing abundantly, which are now overrun with coarse grass and weeds, and inhabited only by wild animals and birds. Chinese



Southwest Gate and Water Gate of Suchau. (From a Chinese Drawing.)

history does not mention the slaughter of the Alan troops and the sad sequel, and we may dismiss them from consideration.

"Suju is the modern Suchau, which was one of the most beautiful and wealthy cities of China until the Taiping rebellion. It is said that when one of the emperors visited the city the people laid the streets with carpets and silks, but the emperor dismounted and required his followers to do the same. Marco exaggerates somewhat about the bridges, but it is proper to say that the bridges of the city and its surroundings are unusually fine and in goodly number.

"Now we have reached the great city of Kinsay, which is the modern Hangchau, and the capital of China before the Mongol

conquest. It was then called Lin-Ngan and not Kinsay;—the latter word is doubtless taken from the Chinese *Kingsze*, which means 'capital,' and was naturally applied to the great city. It was no doubt a fine place in Polo's day, and is still interesting, but we look in vain for the twelve thousand bridges, the palaces on the islands in the lake, and even for the lake having a 'compass of thirty miles.' The walls were not a hundred miles around, or anywhere near that figure; it is the conclusion of modern writers, that the mile in these measurements has been confounded with the Chinese *li*, which is only one third of a mile. The walls at one time measured very nearly a hundred li, and the lake is about thirty li in circumference; in the whole four departments there are 848 bridges and in the city about 120. Some of the bridges are very large and high; according to Barrow the largest vessels of two hundred tons can sail under them without striking their masts.

Ancient Pagoda at Hangchau.

"With these and a few other allowances we may accept Marco's account of Kinsay as an excellent picture of the capital of Southern China six or seven hundred years ago. It is certainly one of the most animated chapters in his book, and the city seems to have made a great impression upon him, if we are to judge by his enthusiasm concerning it. Hangchau is an important commercial point to-day, and there is a great deal of wealth inside its walls and in the surrounding country. The people dress gayly, and the silk manufactures alone are said to employ sixty thousand persons. There was formerly a collection of buildings devoted to public charity in much the manner that

Polo describes; the paved roads still exist in many places; there are numerous public baths; there is yet a large amount of shipping at the neighboring seaport; the custom of mourning prevails now as of yore; and that of making an enumeration of the people has descended to our times. As for the practice of the hostelries keeping a record of arrivals and departures, is it not done now in pretty nearly every part of the world? The hotel registers of to-day are but imitations of what the Chinese possessed in the thirteenth century.

"Our time for this evening has been consumed," said Fred, "but we are not done with Kinsay. On the next evening we shall have more to tell about the great city and its wonders."

Some one in the audience moved an adjournment, and the meeting was dissolved without delay.

CHAPTER XVIII.

More About Kinsay—Southern China—Foo-chow and Other Cities—The Tea Districts of Fokien—How Tea Is Transported—The City and Great Haven of Zayton—Pidgin English—Translation of a Well-Known Rhyme—End of Book Second.

On the next evening Frank was fully recovered from his indisposition, and his voice was as clear and strong as ever. He was warmly greeted by his audience, and after expressing his obligations to Charles for taking his place in the last two readings, and more than filling it, he resumed the story where his young friend had stopped. Before doing so, however, he explained that the chapter he was about to read, concerning Kinsay, did not appear in the early manuscripts of Polo's story, but were only found in Ramusio's edition. "Whether it belongs properly to the narrative," said Frank, "is an open question. But it is so interesting that it should not be thrown aside. Here it is:"

FURTHER PARTICULARS CONCERNING THE GREAT CITY OF KINSAY.

The position of the city is such that it has on one side a lake of fresh and exquisitely clear water (already spoken of), and on the other a very large river. The waters of the latter fill a number of canals of all sizes, which run through the different quarters of the city, carry away all impurities, and then enter the Lake; whence they issue again and flow to the Ocean, thus producing a most excellent atmosphere. By means of these channels, as well as by the streets, you can go all about the city. Both streets and canals are so wide and spacious that carts on the one and boats on the other can readily pass to and fro, conveying necessary supplies to the inhabitants.

At the opposite side the city is shut in by a channel, perhaps 40 miles in length, very wide, and full of water derived from the river aforesaid, which was made by the ancient kings of the country in order to

relieve the river when flooding its banks. This serves also as a defence to the city, and the earth dug from it has been thrown inwards, forming a kind of mound enclosing the city.

In this part are the ten principal markets, though besides these there are a vast number of others in the different parts of the town. The former are all squares of half a mile to the side, and along their front passes the main street, which is 40 paces in width, and runs straight from end to end of the city, crossing many bridges of easy and commodious approach. At every four miles of its length comes one of those great squares of 2 miles (as we have mentioned) in compass. So also parallel to this great street, but at the back of the market-places, there runs a very large canal, on the bank of which towards the squares are built great houses of stone, in which the merchants from India and other foreign parts store their wares, to be handy for the markets. In each of the squares is held a market three days in the week, frequented by 40,000 or 50,000 persons, who bring thither for sale every possible necessary of life, so that there is always an ample supply of every kind of meat and game, as of roebuck, red-deer, fallow-deer, hares, rabbits, partridges, pheasants, francolins, quails, fowls, capons, and of ducks and geese an infinite quantity; for so many are bred on the Lake that for a Venice groat of silver you can have a couple of geese and two couple of ducks. Then there are the shambles where the larger animals are slaughtered, such as calves, beeves, kids, and lambs, the flesh of which is eaten by the rich and the great dignitaries.

Column at Kinsay.

Those markets make a daily display of every kind of vegetables and fruits; and among the latter there are in particular certain pears of enormous size, weighing as much as ten pounds apiece, and the pulp of which is white and fragrant like a confection; besides peaches in their season both yellow and white, of every delicate flavor.

Neither grapes nor wine are produced there, but very good raisins are brought from abroad, and wine likewise. The natives, however, do not much care about wine, being used to that kind of their own made from rice

and spices. From the Ocean Sea also come daily supplies of fish in great quantity, brought 25 miles up the river, and there is also great store of fish from the lake, which is the constant resort of fishermen, who have no business. Their fish is of sundry kinds, changing with the season; and, owing to the impurities of the city which pass into the lake, it is remarkably fat and savory. Any one who should see the supply of fish in the market would suppose it impossible that such a quantity could ever be sold; and yet in a few hours the whole shall be cleared away, so great is the number of inhabitants who are accustomed to delicate living. Indeed they eat fish and flesh at the same meal.

All the ten market-places are encompassed by lofty houses, and below these are shops where all sorts of crafts are carried on, and all sorts of wares are on sale, including spices and jewels and pearls. Some of these shops are entirely devoted to the sale of wine made from rice and spices, which is constantly made fresh and fresh, and is sold very cheap.

Certain of the streets are occupied by the Physicians, and by the Astrologers, who are also teachers of reading and writing; and an infinity of other professions have their places round about those squares. In each of the squares there are two great palaces facing one another, in which are established the officers appointed by the King to decide differences arising between merchants, or other inhabitants of the quarter. It is the daily duty of these officers to see that the guards are at their posts on the neighboring bridges, and to punish them at their discretion if they are absent.

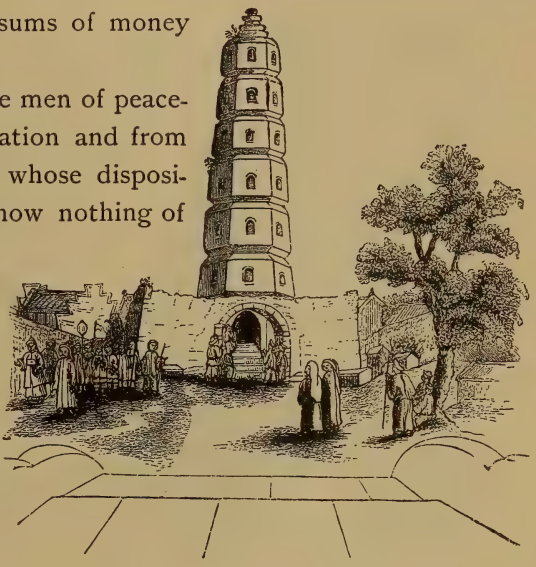
All along the main street that we have spoken of, as running from end to end of the city, both sides are lined with houses and great palaces and the gardens pertaining to them, whilst in the intervals are the houses of tradesmen engaged in their different crafts. The crowd of people that you meet here at all hours, passing this way and that on their different errands, is so vast that no one would believe it possible that victuals enough could be provided for their consumption, unless they should see how, on every market-day, all those squares are thronged and crammed with purchasers, and with the traders who have brought in stores of provisions by land or water; and every thing they bring in is disposed of.

To give you an example of the vast consumption in this city let us

take the article of *pepper;* and that will enable you in some measure to estimate what must be the quantity of victual, such as meat, wine, groceries, which have to be provided for the general consumption. Now Messer Marco heard it stated by one of the Great Kaan's officers of customs that the quantity of pepper introduced daily for consumption into the city of Kinsay amounted to 43 loads, each load being equal to 223 lbs.

The houses of the citizens are well built and elaborately finished; and the delight they take in decoration, in painting, and in architecture leads them to spend in this way sums of money that would astonish you.

The natives of the city are men of peaceful character, both from education and from the example of their kings, whose disposition was the same. They know nothing of handling arms, and keep none in their houses. You hear of no feuds or noisy quarrels or dissensions of any kind among them. Both in their commercial dealings and in their manufactures they are thoroughly honest and truthful, and there is such a degree of good will and neighborly attachment among both men and women that you would take the people who live in the same street to be all one family.



Temple of the Heavenly Winds.

They also treat the foreigners who visit them for the sake of trade with great cordiality, and entertain them in the most winning manner, affording them every help and advice on their business. But on the other hand they hate to see soldiers, and not least those of the Great Kaan's garrisons, regarding them as the cause of their having lost their native kings and lords.

On the Lake of which we have spoken there are numbers of boats and barges of all sizes for parties of pleasure. These will hold 10, 15, 20, or

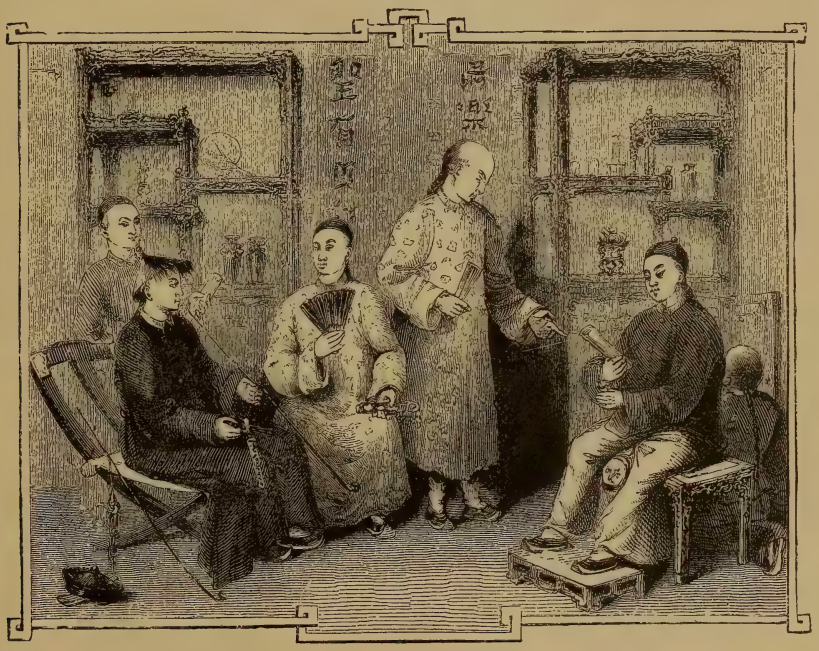
more persons, and are from 15 to 20 paces in length, with flat bottoms and ample breadth of beam, so that they always keep their trim. Any one who desires to go a-pleasuring hires one of these barges, which are always to be found completely furnished with tables and chairs and all the other apparatus for a feast. The roof forms a level deck, on which the crew stand, and pole the boat along whithersoever may be desired, for the lake is not more than 2 paces in depth. The inside of this roof and the rest of the interior is covered with ornamental painting in gay colors, with windows all round that can be shut or opened, so that the party at table can enjoy all the beauty and variety of the prospects on both sides as they pass along. And truly a trip on this lake is a much more charming recreation than can be enjoyed on land. For on the one side lies the city in its entire length, so that the spectators in the barges, from the distance at which they stand, take in the whole prospect in its full beauty and grandeur, with its numberless palaces, temples, monasteries, and gardens, full of lofty trees, sloping to the shore. And the lake is never without a number of other such boats, laden with pleasure parties; for it is the great delight of the citizens here, after they have disposed of the day's business, to pass the afternoon in enjoyment with the ladies of their families, either in these barges or in driving about the city in carriages.

A Teacher of Writing.

Of these latter we must also say something, for they afford one mode of recreation to the citizens in going about the town, as the boats afford another in going about the Lake. In the main street of the city you meet an infinite succession of these carriages passing to and fro. They are long covered vehicles, fitted with curtains and cushions, and affording

room for six persons; and they are in constant request for ladies and gentlemen going on parties of pleasure. In these they drive to certain gardens, where they are entertained by the owners in pavilions erected on purpose, and there they divert themselves the livelong day, returning home in the evening in those same carriages.

The whole enclosure of the Palace was divided into three parts. The middle one was entered by a very lofty gate, on each side of which there stood on the ground-level vast pavilions, the roofs of which were sustained by

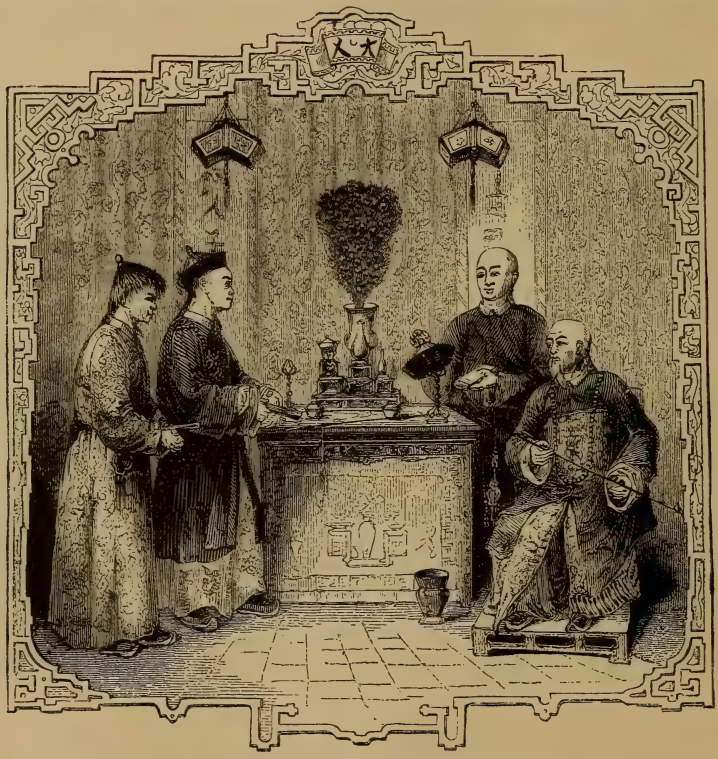


A Chinese Reception Party.

columns painted and wrought in gold and the finest azure. Opposite the gate stood the chief Pavilion, larger than the rest, and painted in like style, with gilded columns, and a ceiling wrought in splendid gilded sculpture, whilst the walls were artfully painted with the stories of departed kings.

On certain days, sacred to his gods, the King Facfur used to hold a great court and give a feast to his chief lords, dignitaries, and rich manufacturers of the city of Kinsay. On such occasions those pavilions used

to give ample accommodation for 10,000 persons sitting at table. This court lasted for ten or twelve days, and exhibited an astonishing and incredible spectacle in the magnificence of the guests, all clothed in silk and gold, with a profusion of precious stones; for they tried to outdo each other in the splendor and richness of their appointments. Behind this great Pavilion that faced the great gate, there was a wall with a passage in it shutting off the inner part of the Palace. On entering this you



A Mandarin Receiving Calls.

found another great edifice in the form of a cloister surrounded by a portico with columns, from which opened a variety of apartments for the King and the Queen, adorned like the outer walls with such elaborate work as we have mentioned. From the cloister again you passed into a covered corridor, six paces in width, of great length, and extending to the margin of the lake. On either side of this corridor were ten courts, in the form of oblong cloisters surrounded by colonnades; and in each cloister or

court were fifty chambers with gardens to each. In these chambers were quartered one thousand young ladies in the service of the King. The King would sometimes go with the Queen and some of these maidens to take his diversion on the lake, or to visit the Idol-temples, in boats all canopied with silk.

The other two parts of the enclosure were distributed in groves and lakes and charming gardens planted with fruit-trees, and preserves for all sorts of animals, such as roe, red-deer, fallow-deer, hares, and rabbits. Here the King used to take his pleasure in company with the Queen and those damsels of his; some in carriages and some on horseback. Sometimes the King would have his dinner carried to those groves, which were dense with lofty trees, and there would be waited on by those young ladies. And thus he passed his life in constant idleness, without so much as knowing what *arms* meant! And the result of all this cowardice and effeminacy was that he lost his dominion to the Great Kaan in that base and shameful way that you have heard.

All this account was given me by a very rich merchant of Kinsay when I was in that city. He was a very old man, and had been in familiar intimacy with the King Facfur, and knew the whole history of his life; and having seen the Palace in its glory was pleased to be my guide over it. As it is occupied by the King appointed by the Great Kaan, the first pavilions are still maintained as they used to be, but the apartments of the ladies are all gone to ruin and can only just be traced. So also the wall that enclosed the groves and gardens is fallen down, and neither trees nor animals are there any longer.

TREATING OF THE GREAT YEARLY REVENUE THAT THE GREAT KAAN HATH FROM KINSAY.

Now I will tell you about the great revenue which the Great Kaan draweth every year from the said city of Kinsay and its territory, forming a ninth part of the whole country of Manzi.

First there is the salt, which brings in a great revenue. For it produces every year, in round numbers, fourscore *tomans* of gold; and the *toman* is worth 70,000 *saggi* of gold, so that the total value of the fourscore tomans will be five millions and six hundred thousand *saggi* of gold,

each saggio being worth more than a gold florin or ducat; in sooth, a vast sum of money! This province, you see, adjoins the ocean, on the shores of which are many lagoons or salt marshes, in which the sea-water dries up during the summer time; and thence they extract such a quantity of salt as suffices for the supply of five of the kingdoms of Manzi besides this one.

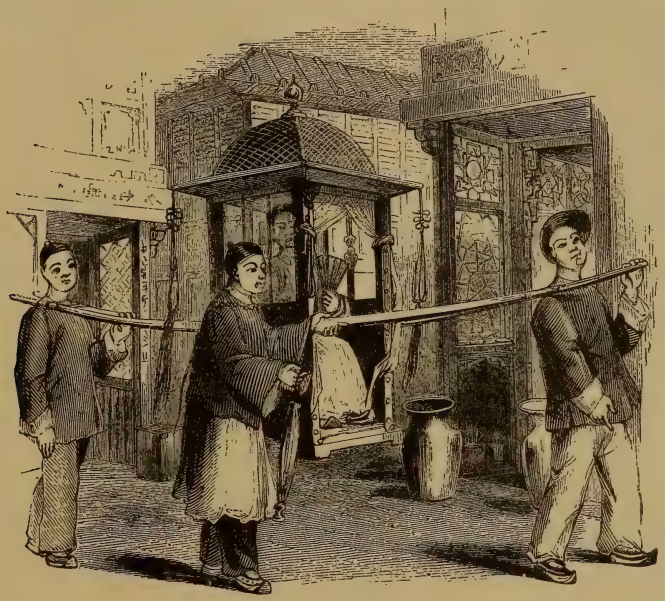
Having told you of the revenue from salt, I will now tell you of that which accrues to the Great Kaan from the duties on merchandize and other matters.

You must know that in this city and its dependencies they make great quantities of sugar, as indeed they do in the other eight divisions of this country; so that I believe the whole of the rest of the world together does not produce such a quantity, at least, if that be true which many people have told me; and the sugar alone again produces an enormous revenue. However, I will not repeat the duties on every article separately, but tell you how they go in the lump. Well, all spicery pays three and a third per cent. on the value; and all merchandize likewise pays three and a third per cent. But sea-borne goods from India and other distant countries pay ten per cent. The rice-wine also makes a great return, and coals, of which there is a great quantity; and so do the twelve guilds of craftsmen that I told you of, with their 12,000 stations apiece, for every article they make pays duty. And the silk which is produced in such abundance makes an immense return. But why should I make a long story of it? The silk, you must know, pays ten per cent., and many other articles also pay ten per cent.

And you must know that Messer Marco Polo, who relates all this, was several times sent by the Great Kaan to inspect the amount of his customs and revenue from this ninth part of Manzi, and he found it to be, exclusive of the salt revenue which we have mentioned already, 210 *tomans* of gold, equivalent to 14,700,000 *saggi* of gold; one of the most enormous revenues that ever was heard of. And if the sovereign has such a revenue from one-ninth part of the country, you may judge what he must have from the whole of it! However, to speak the truth, this part is the greatest and most productive; and because of the great revenue that the Great Kaan derives from it, it is his favorite province, and

he takes all the more care to watch it well, and to keep the people contented.

"The Italians have a proverb," said Fred, who rose when Frank paused, "which says: '*Si non e vero e ben trovato*', 'if it is n't true it 's a good story.' I think we will all agree that whether Polo wrote it or not this last account of Kinsay is worth preserving. It is an excellent appendix to the description in the



Chinese Sedan Chair.

preceding chapter, about whose authenticity there is no dispute, and it seems to be fairly verified by travellers who visited the city soon after Polo's time. Friar Odoric, John Marignolli, and the Archbishop of Soltania, in the fourteenth century, several Arabic writers in the fifteenth, and Semedo and Martini in the seventeenth, all speak in the same exalted terms of the extent, population, and wonders of Kinsay. We must make due allowances for exaggerations, especially in the amount of pepper consumed by the Chinese, the revenues obtained from the city, and the number of soldiers in the garrison. A *toman* is ten thousand, and when we multiply the tomans of the narrative by

that number we get a revenue of bewildering proportions and a garrison that must have been very oppressive. Wassaf, an Arab traveller about A. D. 1300, says the number of tradesmen is so great that 32,000 are employed in the dyers' art alone, and from that fact you may estimate the rest; and a Persian writer says the population of Kinsay is so numerous that 10,000 watchmen are required to guard the city at night!

"The account of the revenue," said Fred, "is from Polo's narrative, and does not depend upon Ramusio's edition like the preceding one. Salt continues to be the source of much of the government revenue in China, and is the cause of a great deal of trickery on the part of the people to avoid paying the duty. One of the most effectual means that they have invented is to boil their rice with sea-weed; of course the weed cannot be taxed, and it contains salt enough to give flavor to the rice. Another way of getting around the law is by the use of brine in which edible articles are preserved. The sale of brine alone is illegal, but if it is used for preserving an article of food it may be dealt in. Consequently a man will put a pound of beef or other meat into a barrel of the strongest brine; the purchaser buys the meat at a good price and gets the brine for nothing, and then he can evaporate the water and retain the salt. Each province has a commissioner who controls the manufacture and sale of salt, and he has the power to compel rich men to carry on the salt business. The commissioner is responsible for the regular revenue from salt in his province, and he compels the manufacturers to pay it over to him, so that he is always secure. In consequence of the many frauds on the government the contractors always lose money, and sometimes a rich man is forced into poverty through being compelled to go into this business.

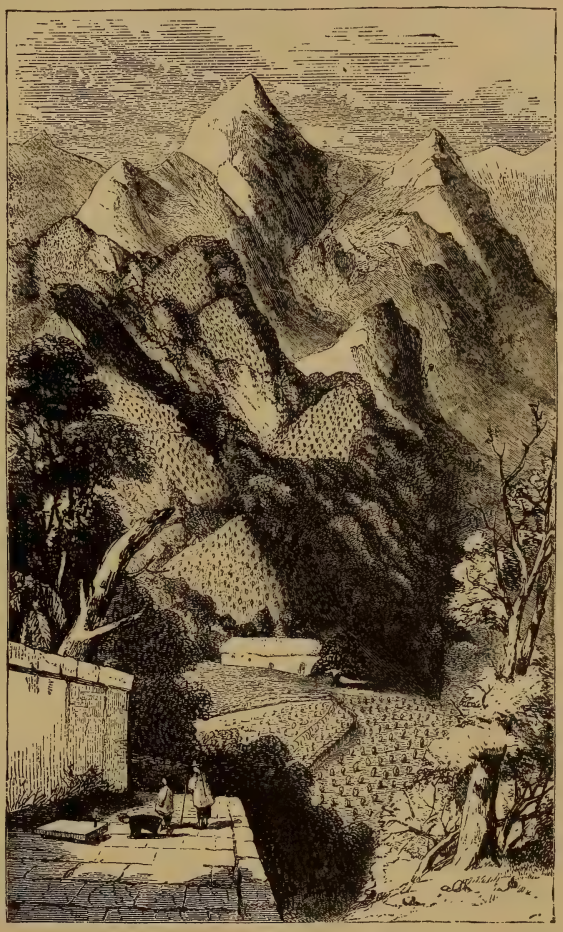
"We will not go further into the salt traffic," continued Fred, "but listen to what Frank has to read in the next chapters."

OF THE CITY OF TANPIJU AND OTHERS.

When you leave Kinsay and travel a day's journey to the south-east, through a plenteous region, passing a succession of dwellings and charm-

ing gardens, you reach the city of TANPIJU, a great, rich, and fine city, under Kinsay. The people live by trade and manufactures and handicrafts, and have all the necessaries in great plenty and cheapness.

There is another city called VUJU at three days' distance from Tanpiju. The people are Idolaters, and the city is under Kinsay. They live by trade and manufactures.



Scene in the Bohea Mountains on Polo's Route.

Travelling through a succession of towns and villages that look like one continuous city, two days farther on to the south-east you find the great and fine city of GHIUJU, which is under Kinsay. At this city you find the largest and longest canes that are in all Manzi; they are full four palms in girth and 15 paces in length.

When you have left Ghiuju you travel four days S. E. through a beautiful country, in which towns and villages are very numerous. There is abundance of game both in beasts and birds; and there are very large and fierce lions. After those four days you come to the great and fine city of CHANSHAN. It is situated upon a hill which divides the River, so that the one portion flows up country and the other down. It is still under the government of Kinsay.

I should tell you that in all the country of Manzi they have no sheep, though they have beeves and kine, goats and kids and swine in abundance.

When you leave Changshan you travel three days through a very fine country with many towns and villages, traders and craftsmen, and abounding in game of all kinds, and arrive at the city of CUJU. It is a fine, noble, and rich city, and is the last of the government of Kinsay in this direction. The other kingdom which we now enter, called Fuju, is also one of the nine great divisions of Manzi as Kinsay is.

CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF FUJU.

On leaving Cuju, which is the last city of the kingdom of Kinsay, you enter the kingdom of FUJU, and travel six days in a south-easterly direction through a country of mountains and valleys, in which are a number of towns and villages with great plenty of victuals and abundance of game. Lions, great and strong, are also very numerous. The country produces ginger and galingale in immense quantities, insomuch that for a Venice groat you may buy fourscore pounds of good fine-flavored ginger. They have also a kind of fruit resembling saffron, and which serves the purpose of saffron just as well.

And you must know the people eat all manner of unclean things, even the flesh of a man, provided he has not died a natural death. So they look out for the bodies of those that have been put to death and eat their flesh, which they consider excellent.

Those who go to war in those parts do as I am going to tell you. They shave the hair off the forehead and cause it to be painted in blue like the blade of a glaive. They all go afoot except the chief; they carry spears and swords, and are the most savage people in the world, for they go about constantly killing people, whose blood they drink, and then devour the bodies.

Now I will quit this and speak of other matters. You must know then that after going three days out of the six that I told you of you come to the city of KELINFU, a very great and noble city, belonging to the Great Kaan. This city hath three stone bridges which are among the finest and best in the world. They are a mile long and some

nine paces in width, and they are all decorated with rich marble columns. Indeed they are such fine and marvellous works that to build any one of them must have cost a treasure.

The people live by trade and manufactures, and have great store of silk which they weave into various stuffs, and of ginger and galingale. They also make much cotton cloth of dyed thread, which is sent all over Manzi. Their women are particularly beautiful. And there is a strange thing there which I needs must tell you. You must know they have a kind of fowls which have no feathers, but hair only, like a cat's fur. They are black all over; they lay eggs just like our fowls, and are very good to eat.

In the other three days of the six that I have mentioned above, you continue to meet with many towns and villages, with traders, and goods for sale, and craftsmen. There is plenty of game of all kinds, and there are great and fierce lions which attack travellers. In the last of those three days' journey, when you have gone 15 miles you find a city called UNKEN, where there is an immense quantity of sugar made. From this city the Great Kaan gets all the sugar for the use of his Court, a quantity worth a great amount of money. And before this city came under the Great Kaan these people knew not how to make fine sugar; they only used to boil and skim the juice, which when cold left a black paste. But after they came under the Great Kaan some men of Babylonia who happened to be at the Court proceeded to this city and taught the people to refine the sugar with the ashes of certain trees.

There is no more to say of the place, so now we shall speak of the splendor of Fuju. When you have gone 15 miles from the city of Unken, you come to this noble city, which is the capital of the kingdom. So we will now tell you what we know of it.

CONCERNING THE GREATNESS OF THE CITY OF FUJU.

Now this city of Fuju is the key of the kingdom which is called CHONKA, and which is one of the nine great divisions of Manzi. The city is a seat of great trade and great manufactures. A large garrison is maintained there to keep the kingdom in peace and subjection. For the city is one which is apt to revolt on very slight provocation.

There flows through the middle of this city a great river, which is about a mile in width, and many ships are built at the city which are launched upon this river. Enormous quantities of sugar are made there, and there is a great traffic in pearls and precious stones. For many ships of India come to these parts bringing many merchants who traffic about the Isles of the Indies. For this city is, as I must tell you, in the vicinity of the Ocean Port of ZAYTON, which is greatly frequented by the ships of India with their cargoes of various merchandize; and from Zayton ships come this way right up to the city of Fuju by the river I have told you of; and 't is in this way that the precious wares of India come hither.

The city is really a very fine one and kept in good order, and all necessaries of life are there to be had in great abundance and cheapness.

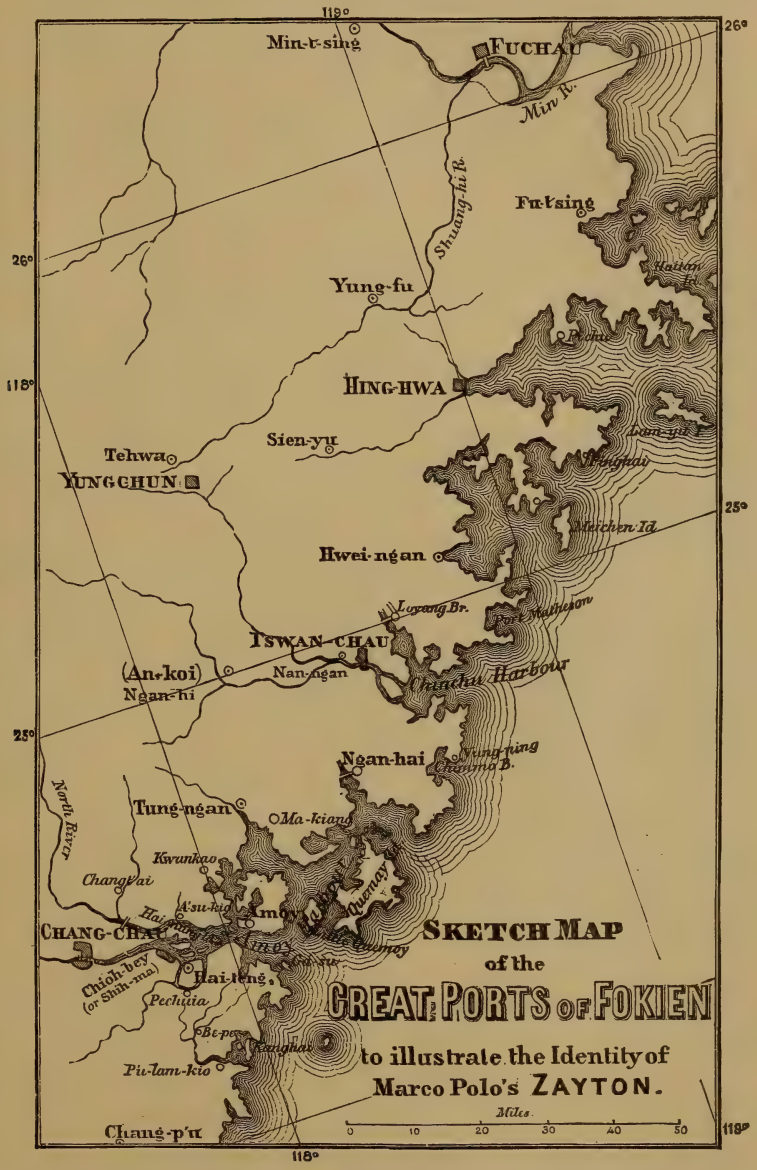
OF THE CITY AND GREAT HAVEN OF ZAYTON.

Now when you quit Fuju and cross the River, you travel for five days south-east through a fine country, meeting with a constant succession of flourishing cities, towns, and villages, rich in every product. You travel by mountains and valleys and plains, and in some places by great forests in which are many of the trees which give Camphor. There is plenty of game on the road, both of bird and beast. The people are all traders and craftsmen, and under the goverment of Fuju. When you have accomplished those five days' journey you arrive at the very great and noble city of ZAYTON, which is also subject to Fuju.

At this city you must know is the Haven of Zayton, frequented by all the ships of India, which bring thither spicery and all other kinds of costly wares. It is the port also that is frequented by all the merchants of Manzi, for hither is imported the most astonishing quantity of goods and of precious stones and pearls, and from this they are distributed all over Manzi. And I assure you that for one shipload of pepper that goes to Alexandria or elsewhere, destined for Christendom, there come a hundred such, aye and more too, to this haven of Zayton; for it is one of the two greatest havens in the world for commerce.

The Great Kaan derives a very large revenue from the duties paid in this city and haven; for you must know that on all the merchandize im-

ported, including precious stones and pearls, he levies a duty of ten per cent., or in other words takes tithe of every thing. Then again the ship's



charge for freight on small wares is 30 per cent., on pepper 44 per cent., and on lignaloes, sandalwood, and other bulky goods 40 per cent.; so that

between freight and the Kaan's duties the merchant has to pay a good half the value of his investment, though on the other half he makes such a profit that he is always glad to come back with a new supply of merchandize. But you may well believe from what I have said that the Kaan hath a vast revenue from this city.

There is great abundance here of all provision for every necessity of man's life. It is a charming country, and the people are very quiet, and fond of an easy life. Many come hither from Upper India to have their bodies painted with the needle in the way we have elsewhere described, there being many adepts at this craft in the city.

Let me tell you also that in this province there is a town called TYUNJU, where they make vessels of porcelain of all sizes, the finest that can be imagined. They make it nowhere but in that city, and thence it is exported all over the world. Here it is abundant and very cheap, insomuch that for a Venice groat you can buy three dishes so fine that you could not imagine better.

I should tell you that in this city (*i. e.* of Zayton) they have a peculiar language. For you must know that throughout all Manzi they employ one speech and one kind of writing only, but yet there are local differences of dialect, as you might say of Genoese, Milanese, Florentines, and Neapolitans, who, though they speak different dialects, can understand one another.

And I assure you the Great Kaan has as large customs and revenues from this kingdom of Chonka as from Kinsay, aye and more too.

We have now spoken of but three out of the nine kingdoms of Manzi, to wit Yanju and Kinsay and Fuju. We could tell you about the other six, but it would be too long a business; so we will say no more about them.

And now you have heard all the truth about Cathay and Manzi and many other countries, as has been set down in this Book; the customs of the people and the various objects of commerce, the beasts and birds, the gold and silver and precious stones, and many other matters have been rehearsed to you. But our Book as yet does not contain nearly all that we purpose to put therein. For we have still to tell you all about the people of India and the notable things of that country, which are well

worth the describing, for they are marvellous indeed. What we shall tell is all true, and without any lies. And we shall set down all the particulars in writing just as Messer Marco Polo related them. And he well knew the facts, for he remained so long in India, and enquired so diligently into the manners and peculiarities of the nations, that I can assure you there never was a single man before who learned so much and beheld so much as he did.

"As you observe by Marco's words," said Fred, "we are about to leave China for other lands. We are at the end of the second book of Polo's narrative, and at the next meeting we shall begin with the third book.

Antique Porcelain Vase.

"And now a few words concerning the provinces and cities he has just described.

"Tanpiju has not been clearly identified, but Col. Yule thinks it stands for Shaohing, though he is by no means certain. Vuju is probably Kinwha, which was called Wuchau in Polo's day; Ghiuju is Kiuchau; Changshan is Kiangshan; and Cuju is Chuchu. The last is an insignificant town, and may not be the one indicated; there are some difficulties respecting the distances between the places, which Col. Yule explains at length, but are hardly worth our while to consider.

"The large bamboos mentioned by Polo are still to be found in this region, and he does not exaggerate their dimensions. One traveller says he has seen rafts of bamboos on the river near Hangchau fully a third of a mile in length.

"One singular feature of the story of our Venetian is that in the district now under consideration he was in the midst of the tea regions of China, but he makes no mention of the famous plant and its commercial product. Nowhere in all his book is there any allusion to the growth of the plant, the preparation of tea, and its use as an article of drink."

"Perhaps tea was not cultivated there in his time," said one of the youths seated near Fred, "and if so, there was no occasion for him to speak of it."

"That is possible," said Dr. Allen, "but hardly probable. The use of tea is said to have been introduced into China from Corea about the fourth century of our era, and carried to Japan in the ninth century. Many of the natives of China believe the plant is indigenous in their country, and they have certainly known it for ten or twelve centuries. It is possible that it had not reached the Fokien district of China when Polo appears to have passed through it, and consequently the steep hill-sides were not as now covered with tea plantations.

"In the mountain districts where the tea is grown all transportation is done upon the shoulders of men. The finer teas are never allowed to touch the ground in their journey; a single chest is lashed to the ends of two short poles, and the other ends are brought together so as to form a triangle, which passes over the coolie's head. The chest lies on his shoulders, and when he wishes to rest he places the ends of the sticks on the ground and lets the weight fall upon them; when he stops at a refreshment house by the wayside the chest leans against the wall and is sustained by the poles. The common teas are carried in the ordinary way, two chests being slung at the ends of a pole over the coolie's shoulders and placed on the ground whenever the bearer desires to rest; consequently the chests are soiled, and quite likely the tea is injured by the dampness of the ground, while the fine tea arrives at its destination in a much better condition."

Some one wished to know when tea was first brought to Europe.

"As to that," replied the doctor, "we are in some doubt. About the end of the sixteenth century it was mentioned by a Portuguese writer, who refers to it as a product of China and Japan. In the office of the East India Company there is a letter written by a Mr. Wickham, dated June 27, 1615, in which tea is mentioned. The Chinese name for tea is *tcha* or *cha ;* the Portuguese writer calls it *chia*, and Mr. Wickham *chaw*. The Russians to-day call it *chi*. In the early part of the seventeenth century it was frequently sent in little parcels as presents to wealthy inhabitants of London by their friends in China and India, and through these small packets it became generally known. In 1657 there was a consignment of a considerable quantity to Thomas Garway of London ; he established a house for selling the prepared beverage, and it is in existence to-day under the name of 'Garraway's Coffee-House.' You may remember that one of Mr. Pickwick's letters to his landlady is dated 'Garraway's, 12 o'clock.' From 1660 to 1689 the government exacted a duty of eight pence per gallon on the decoction of tea ready for drinking, but since the latter date the duty has been levied upon the weight of the dry tea in packages.

Carrying Common Tea.

Carrying Fine Tea.

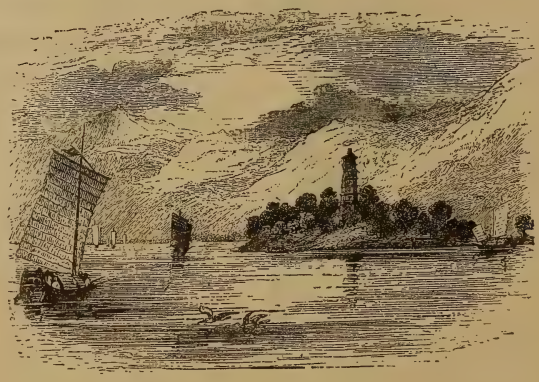
"From this small beginning two hundred years ago the consumption of tea had a rapid growth, and the article has long been regarded as a prime necessity in many countries. Foremost among these are England, Russia, and the United States.

England imports about 150,000,000 pounds of tea annually, and the United States very nearly a third of that quantity. I cannot give you at the moment the importations of tea into Russia, but they are very large, as the decoction is the national drink of the country from the emperor to the lowest peasant."

Tea Picker, Canton.

As the doctor ended his dissertation upon tea Fred resumed his observations.

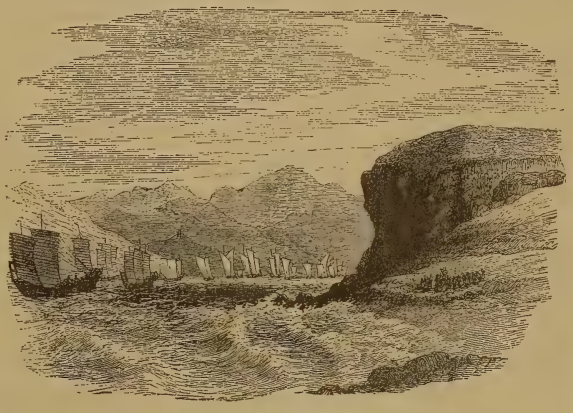
"Polo's Fuju is the modern Foochow, whence the largest quantities of tea find their way to Europe and America. His lions, as in other places, are tigers, and still to be found there; but his cannibals are supposed to be an original tribe then living in the mountains, but now either extinct or sufficiently civilized to have abandoned their peculiar diet. Martini says that as late as the seventeenth century the mountains of Fokien contained an uncivilized race of people who maintained their independence of the Chinese government. Kelinfu is the modern Kienningfu, an important city on the upper part of the Min river, the same on which Foochow stands. The fowls covered with fur instead of feathers are well known at Foochow and in its neighborhood, but they are white instead of black. The Chinese call them 'velvet-hair fowls,' and specimens of them have been brought to Eu-



View on the Min.

rope and America. Unken is probably the modern Minsing, about fifteen miles above Foochow, and corresponding to the description in the text.

"There is a perplexity concerning the 'city and great haven of Zayton,' and much discussion in consequence. The arguments pro and con may be summed up that Zayton (city) was the modern T'swanchau, and the 'great haven' was the harbor of Chin-Chu. Or it may be that Zayton was the modern Changchau, of which Amoy is the seaport, and the great haven was the harbor of Amoy, one of the finest in the world. Chinchu harbor is of little consequence now, as it seems to be filling up, but in Polo's time it may have been of considerable importance, and deep enough to furnish anchorage for the ships of Kublai Khan. Tyunju is not clearly identified, but is thought to be on Poyang Lake, where the manufactory of porcelain is still carried on. Much of the china-ware used in our houses was made on the borders of this lake, and the manufacturers have long been celebrated for the excellence of their work.



The Khan's Fleet Leaving the Port of Zayton.

"Marco is right in his statement about the different dialects and languages of China. The written language is the same throughout the country, but there is great variety in the spoken language. A gentleman who lived at Foochow and studied Chinese had two teachers, one for the mandarin and the other for the common language. He said they read the same books, composed in the same style, and attached precisely the same ideas to the written symbols, but could not understand each other in conversation. There is as much difference in the

Chinese language in the various parts of the country as in the dialects of England, France, or Austria. A native of Amoy could not understand a native of Peking, and the same would be the result if a Canton boatman should endeavor to talk to a Shanghai coolie."

"Please tell us something about 'Pidgin-English,' and how it originated," said a voice from the rear of the room.

Fred looked inquiringly at the doctor, and the latter rose to the young man's assistance.

"Pidgin-English," said he, "may be called 'business English,' 'pidgin' being the result of the attempt of a Chinese to pronounce the word 'business.' It is a compound of English, Portuguese, Hindostanee, and Chinese words, but with English largely predominating, and is used in the treaty ports and other places where natives come in contact with Europeans. It embraces about four hundred words, and is readily learned by both Chinese and Europeans, especially if the latter are English-speaking to begin with. A few words do duty for many, and the language has no inflections, declensions, moods, or tenses. All the pronouns of the third person are included in *he*, those of the first person in *my*, and those of the second in *you;* all verbs of action, intention, existence, and kindred conditions are represented by *hab*, *belongey*, or *can do*. Possession in all its forms is covered by *catchee*, and position by *side;* the vocabulary contains *inside*, *outside*, *bottom-side* (below), and *top-side* (above). There are printed vocabularies for the use of Chinese students in this language, with Chinese phrases and their Pidgin-English equivalents in parallel columns. You will often see a servant equipped with one of these little books, which he glances at whenever he encounters a difficulty in conversation.

"Having given you the outline of the principles of Pidgin-English," continued the doctor, "I will illustrate its use by rendering the old nursery rhyme of little Jack Horner into that peculiar language :

"'Ittee Johnny Horner,
B'long insidee corner,—
Makee chow-chow one Clismas pie.
He put insidee tum,
Catchee big piecee plum,—
Hi Yah! What one good chilo my!'

"There is an old proverb," continued the doctor, as soon as the laugh over this quaint rendering had subsided, "which says there are no needles with double points, and no man is perfect in the eyes of others. Its Pidgin-English rendering would be:

"'You catch no needle sharp at both he ins.
You b'longey no all-good man among you flins.'

"There is a Pidgin-French language at Saigon and other Cochin-Chinese ports, and at Kiachta, on the Russian frontier, there is a Pidgin-Russian in which a great deal of business is transacted. But I am taking too much of Fred's time and will stop."

That the doctor's exposition of Pidgin-English was well appreciated was evidenced by the applause and laughter that followed it. Fred said he had nothing to add, and even if he had any thing to say he should hesitate to give them another instalment of dry details after the charming little entertainment which the doctor had just completed. Therefore he moved an adjournment, which was carried without opposition.

CHAPTER XIX.

Chinese Ships in the Thirteenth Century—Polo's Description of Japan, and of Kublai's Attempt to Conquer It—Cochin China, Java, and Siam ; Products of Those Countries—A King with a Numerous Family—Incorrect Statements about Java—Siam's Enlightened Ruler.

As the members of the Society entered Dr. Allen's library on the evening appointed for their next session, their attention was drawn to a large sketch in crayon which hung on the wall opposite the door. It was entitled "The Khan's Fleet Passing through the Indian Archipelago," and represented a fleet of Oriental ships propelled by sails and oars among islands whose verdure showed them to be tropical. From a mountain in the background a stream of smoke indicated a volcano, while a mass of stones on the left of the picture suggested to some of the imaginative spectators that the artist had endeavored to delineate the results of an earthquake. The drawing was the work of Miss Mary Allen, and was an enlarged copy of a wood-cut in the style of mediæval times. It was studied in all its details before and during the reading, and greatly aided the youthful auditors in understanding Polo's description of the ships of his day.

They made many comparisons between the naval architecture of the present century and that which was the fashion in the time of Kublai Khan. While one of the youths was comparing the model of the junk in the foreground to that of a transatlantic steamship of 1884, the hands of the clock indicated the time for Frank to begin the exercises of the evening, which he did without a moment's delay.

BOOK III.

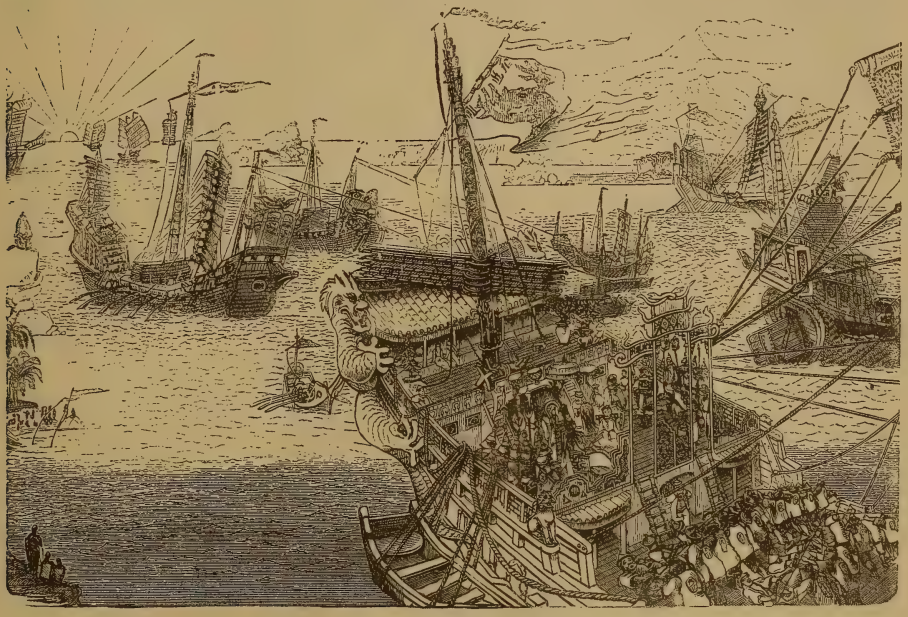
OF THE MERCHANT SHIPS OF MANZI THAT SAIL UPON THE INDIAN SEAS.

Having finished our discourse concerning those countries wherewith our Book hath been occupied thus far, we are now about to enter on the subject of INDIA, and to tell you of all the wonders thereof.

And first let us speak of the ships in which merchants go to and fro amongst the Isles of India.

These ships, you must know, are of fir timber. They have but one deck, though each of them contains some 50 or 60 cabins, wherein the merchants abide greatly at their ease, every man having one to himself. The ship hath but one rudder, but it hath four masts; and sometimes they have two additional masts, which they ship and unship at pleasure.

Moreover the larger of their vessels have some thirteen compartments or severances in the interior, made with planking strongly framed, in case



The Khan's Fleet Passing through the Indian Archipelago.

mayhap the ship should spring a leak, either by running on a rock or by the blow of a hungry whale, as shall betide ofttimes, for when the ship in her course by night sends a ripple back alongside of the whale, the creature seeing the foam fancies there is something to eat afloat, and makes a rush forward, whereby it often shall stave in some part of the ship. In such case the water that enters the leak flows to the bilge, which is always kept clear; and the mariners having ascertained where the damage is, empty the cargo from that compartment into those

adjoining, for the planking is so well fitted that the water cannot pass from one compartment to another. They then stop the leak and replace the lading.

The fastenings are all of good iron nails and the sides are double, one plank laid over the other, and caulked outside and in. The planks are not pitched, for those people do not have any pitch, but they daub the sides with another matter, deemed by them far better than pitch; it is this. You see they take some lime and some chopped hemp, and these they knead together with a certain wood-oil; and when the three are thoroughly amalgamated, they hold like any glue. And with this mixture they do pay their ships.

Each of their great ships requires at least 200 mariners, some of them 300. They are indeed of great size, for one ship shall carry 5000 or 6000 baskets of pepper, and they used formerly to be larger than they are now. And aboard these ships, you must know, when there is no wind they use sweeps, and these sweeps are so big that to pull them requires four mariners to each. Every great ship has certain large barks or tenders attached to it; these are large enough to carry 1000 baskets of pepper, and carry 50 or 60 mariners apiece, some of them 80 or 100, and they are likewise moved by oars; they assist the great ship by towing her, at such times as her sweeps are in use, or even when she is under sail, if the wind be somewhat on the beam; not if the wind be astern, for then the sails of the big ship would take the wind out of those of the tenders, and she would run them down. Each ship has two or three of these barks, but one is bigger than the others. There are also some ten small boats for the service of each great ship, to lay out the anchors, catch fish, bring supplies aboard, and the like. When the ship is under sail she carries these boats slung to her sides. And the large tenders have their boats in like manner.

When the ship has been a year in work and they wish to repair her, they nail on a third plank over the first two, and caulk and pay it well; and when another repair is wanted they nail on yet another plank, and so on year by year as it is required. Howbeit, they do this only for a certain number of years, and till there are six thicknesses of planking. When a ship has come to have six planks on her sides, one over the

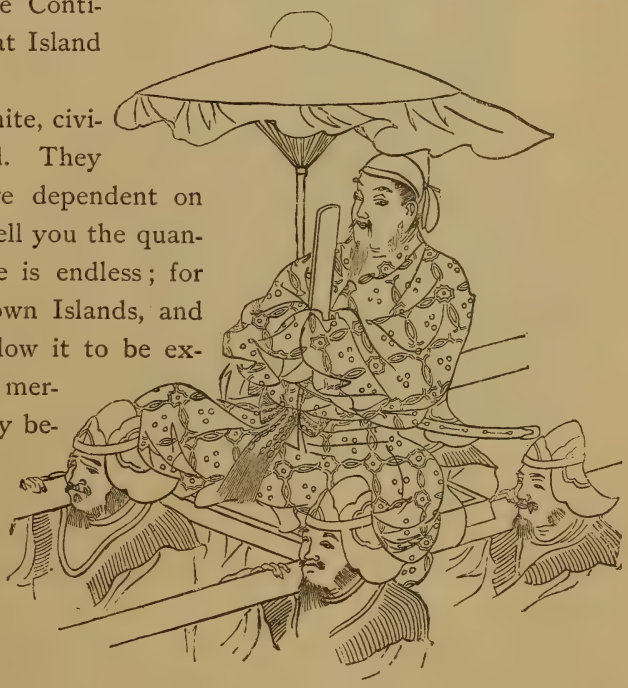
other, they take her no more on the high seas, but make use of her for coasting as long as she will last, and then they break her up.

Now that I have told you about the ships which sail upon the Ocean Sea and among the Isles of India, let us proceed to speak of the various wonders of India; but first and foremost I must tell you about a number of Islands that there are in that part of the Ocean Sea where we now are, I mean the Islands lying to the eastward. So let us begin with an Island which is called Chipangu.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ISLAND OF CHIPANGU, AND THE GREAT KAAN'S DESPATCH OF A HOST AGAINST IT.

CHIPANGU is an Island towards the east in the high seas, 1500 miles distant from the Continent; and a very great Island it is.

The people are white, civilized, and well-favored. They are Idolaters, and are dependent on nobody. And I can tell you the quantity of gold they have is endless; for they find it in their own Islands, and the King does not allow it to be exported. Moreover few merchants visit the country because it is so far from the main land, and thus it comes to pass that their gold is abundant beyond all measure.



Ancient Japanese Emperor. (From a Native Drawing.)

I will tell you a wonderful thing about the Palace of the Lord of that Island. You must know that he hath a great Palace which is entirely roofed with fine gold, just as our churches are roofed with lead, insomuch that it would scarcely be possible to estimate its value. More-

over, all the pavement of the Palace, and the floors of the chambers are entirely of gold, in plates like slabs of stone, a good two fingers thick; and the windows also are of gold, so that altogether the richness of this Palace is past all bounds and all belief.

They have also pearls in abundance, which are of a rose color, but fine, big, and round, and quite as valuable as the white ones. In this Island some of the dead are buried, and others are burnt. When a body is burnt, they put one of these pearls in the mouth, for such is their custom. They have also quantities of other precious stones.

Japanese Nurse-Maid.

Cublay, the Grand Kaan who now reigneth, having heard much of the immense wealth that was in this Island, formed a plan to get possession of it. For this purpose he sent two of his Barons with a great navy, and a great force of horse and foot. These Barons were able and valiant men, one of them called ABACAN and the other VONSAINCHIN, and they weighed with all their company from the ports of Zayton and Kinsay, and put out to sea. They sailed until they reached the Island aforesaid, and there they landed, and occupied the open country and the villages, but did not succeed in getting possession of any city or castle. And so a disaster befel them, as I shall now relate.

You must know that there was much ill-will between those two Barons, so that one would do nothing to help the other. And it came to pass that there arose a north wind which blew with great fury, and caused great damage along the coasts of that Island, for its harbors were few. It blew so hard that the Great Kaan's fleet could not stand against it. And when the chiefs saw that, they came to the con-

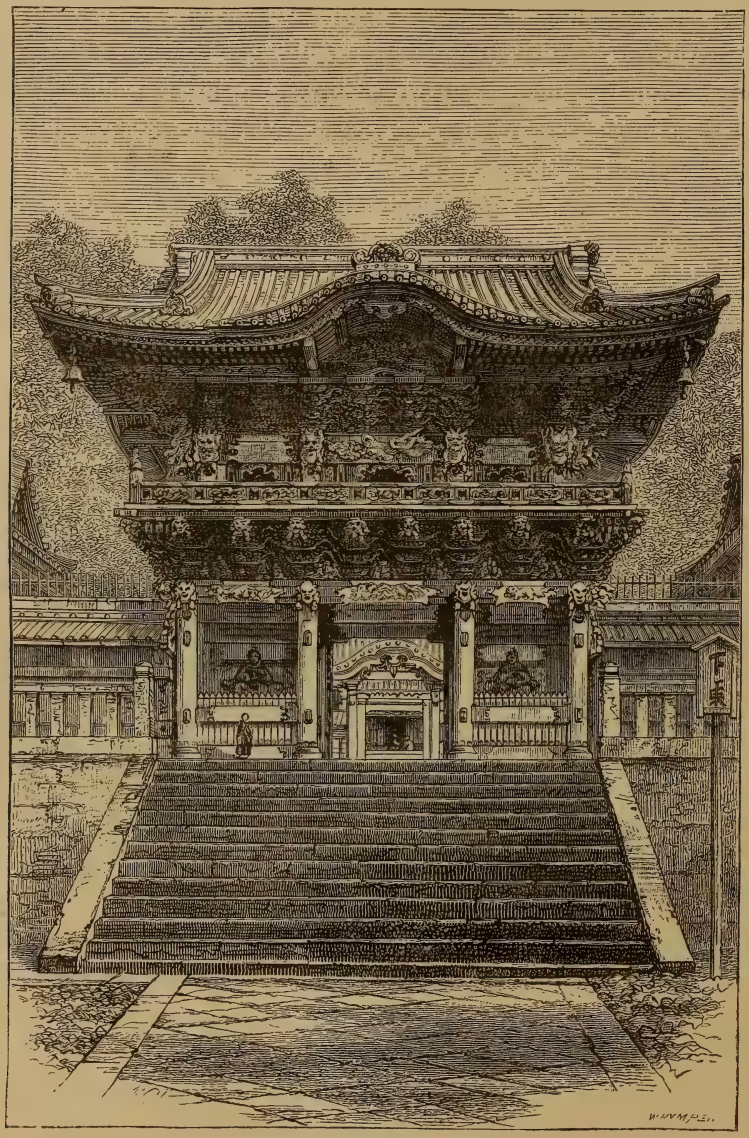
clusion that if the ships remained where they were the whole navy would perish. So they all got on board and made sail to leave the country. But when they had gone about four miles they came to a small Island, on which they were driven ashore in spite of all they could do; and a large part of the fleet was wrecked, and a great multitude of the force perished, so that there escaped only some 30,000 men, who took refuge on this Island.

These held themselves for dead men, for they were without food, and knew not what to do, and they were in great despair when they saw that

Mount Fusiyama, Japan.

such of the ships as had escaped the storm were making full sail for their own country without the slightest sign of turning back to help them. And this was because of the bitter hatred between the two Barons in command of the force; for the Baron who escaped never showed the slightest desire to return to his colleague who was left upon the Island in the way you have heard; though he might easily have done so after the storm ceased; and it endured not long. He did nothing of the kind, however, but made straight for home. And you must know that the

Island to which the soldiers had escaped was uninhabited; there was not a creature upon it but themselves.



Yomei Gate, Nikkô, Japan.

Now we will tell you what befel those who escaped on the fleet, and also those who were left upon the Island.

WHAT FURTHER CAME OF THE GREAT KAAN'S EXPEDITION AGAINST CHIPANGU.

You see those who were left upon the Island, some 30,000 souls, as I have said, did hold themselves for dead men, for they saw no possible means of escape. And when the King of the Great Island got news how the one part of the expedition had saved themselves upon that Isle, and the other part was scattered and fled, he was right glad thereat, and he gathered together all the ships of his territory and proceeded with them, the sea now being calm, to the little Isle, and landed his troops all round it. And when the Tartars saw them thus arrive, and the whole force landed, without any guard having been left on board the ships (the act of men very little acquainted with such work), they had the sagacity to feign flight. Now the Island was very high in the middle, and whilst the enemy were hastening after them by one road they fetched a compass by another, and in this way managed to reach the enemy's ships and to get aboard of them. This they did easily enough, for they encountered no opposition.

Buddhist Priests, Japan.

Once they were on board they got under weigh immediately for the great Island, and landed there, carrying with them the standards and banners of the King of the Island; and in this wise they advanced to the capital. The garrison of the city, suspecting nothing wrong, when they saw their own banners advancing, supposed that it was their own host

returning, and so gave them admittance. The Tartars as soon as they had got in seized all the bulwarks and drove out all who were in the place. In this way the Great Kaan's people got possession of the city.

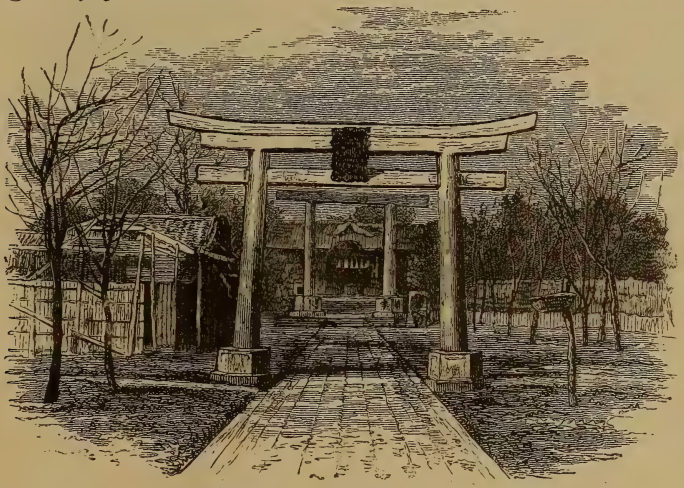
When the King of the great Island and his army perceived that both fleet and city were lost, they were greatly cast down; howbeit, they got away to the great Island on board some of the ships which had not been carried off. And the King then gathered all his host to the siege of the city, and invested it so straitly that no one could go in or come out. Those who were within held the place for seven months, and strove by all

Japanese Street and Canal.

means to send word to the Great Kaan; but it was all in vain; they never could get the intelligence carried to him. So when they saw they could hold out no longer they gave themselves up, on condition that their lives should be spared, but still that they should never quit the Island. And this befel in the year of our Lord 1279. The Great Kaan ordered the Baron who had fled so disgracefully to lose his head. And afterwards he caused the other also, who had been left on the Island, to be put to death, for he had never behaved as a good soldier ought to do.

But I must tell you a wonderful thing that I had forgotten, which happened on this expedition.

You see, at the beginning of the affair, when the Kaan's people had landed on the great Island and occupied the open country as I told you, they stormed a tower belonging to some of the islanders who refused to surrender, and they cut off the heads of all the garrison except eight; on these eight they found it impossible to inflict any wound! Now this was by virtue of certain stones which they had in their arms inserted between the skin and the flesh, with such skill as not to show at all externally. And the charm and virtue of these stones was such that those who wore them could never perish by steel. So when the Barons learned this they ordered the men to be beaten to death with clubs. And after their death the stones were extracted from the bodies of all, and were greatly prized.



Gateway of a Japanese Temple.

Now the story of the discomfiture of the Great Kaan's folk came to pass as I have told you. But let us have done with that matter, and return to our subject.

"The picture before you," said Fred, as he rose to comment upon what Frank had read, "may be taken as a representation of a Chinese fleet of to-day. In Polo's time the Chinese had made greater progress in naval architecture than the nations of Europe, and it is doubtless owing to this circumstance that he describes the Khan's fleet so minutely. But they have made no

advance in the six centuries that have elapsed; their junks today are fashioned exactly like those of a thousand years ago, and managed in the same manner. None of them can sail more than eight miles an hour, and to accomplish even this they must have the wind fully in their favor. They are built of pine or fir, are caulked with hemp, old nets, and the fibre of a creeping vine that grows abundantly in China, and daubed with wood oil obtained from a tree which they call *Tong-shu*. Many of them use sweeps or great oars which require three or four men to handle, and their sails are of matting instead of canvas. About the only change is in their armament, as they now carry cannon for aggressive or defensive purposes; cannon were unknown in Polo's time and therefore the war-ships of the Khan could hardly be expected to have had batteries of artillery.

"You may think the size of the crew exaggerated, but it is not at all unlikely that the junks carried as many people as Marco tells us. At the present time junks carry great numbers of men. I quote the following from the Chinese Repository:

"In February, 1822, Captain Pearl, of the English ship *Indiana*, coming through Gaspar Straits, fell in with the cargo and crew of a wrecked junk, and saved 198 persons out of 1600, with whom she had left Amoy, whom he landed at Pontianak."

"One important statement in Polo's narrative deserves your attention. He says the ships are divided into compartments or severances in the interior, as a precaution in case they should run upon rocks or be attacked by hungry whales, The use of water-tight compartments in ships seems to have been quite unknown in Europe until very recently, or at any rate no ships were constructed on that plan until within this century. The companies engaged in navigating the Atlantic between America and Europe advertise that their ships are built in compartments, and this principle has been practically adopted within the last thirty years. So, you see, we have gone back to the Chinese for our instruction, or rather what many have claimed as an invention of the

nineteenth century was in use among the Chinese in the thirteenth. The advantages of the compartment system have been well shown in numerous instances in the last decade or two. Many a steamer crashing into an iceberg or colliding with another ship would have gone to the bottom of the ocean if she had been constructed in the old way. There is this difference between the Chinese and ourselves, that they seem to have made thirteen compartments in their ships while we are contented with five or six.

Japanese Farm House.

"In the modern Chinese junk the compartments are often rented to merchants for the storage of their goods; each merchant has a compartment to himself, and he also has a voice in the management of the ship, so that there are often as many captains as there are places hired out. If they are harmonious all goes well enough and every thing is left to the sailing-master, but it often happens that they want to go to half a dozen places at once, and sometimes when a storm arises there is a great difference of opinion as to whether they should continue on their

course or run back to the place they started from. There is a lively conference among them on the subject; all talk at once, and occasionally it ends in a fight with hands and weapons before the junk's course can be determined.

"They occasionally have boats in tow as Polo describes, and as shown in the picture, but less frequently than he seems to indicate. He is not altogether right in saying that they cover a junk with an extra planking when she has been at work for a year, and continue this process till they have covered her with six thicknesses of planks. The junks are very solidly built, and as they only venture to sea in good weather, and run for a port at the first sign of a storm, they last a long time. Dr. Allen was told in China that there are many junks now in service that have been steadily at work for a hundred years, and it is not at all unusual to see one that has belonged in a family of sailors for two or three generations."

Summer and Winter Dress.

One of the young listeners wished to know the derivation of the word "junk."

"The word in Chinese is *june* or *chune*," was the reply, "and its plural is *jonuk*. I believe, however, that the Portuguese claim that it comes from their word *junco*, meaning ship or boat, but

the Chinese say they had that name for their vessels before Portugal was ever heard of. An English traveller, in an effort to be funny, said the Chinese built their ships a mile or two long and cut off a *junk* whenever they wanted one, and hence the name.

"Polo says nothing about the Chinese custom, now universal, of painting an eye on each side of the bows of all their water craft, no matter whether they are boats or junks. The usage probably arose from copying the form of a fish or sea-monster as the model, and painting the eyes in their proper position. All

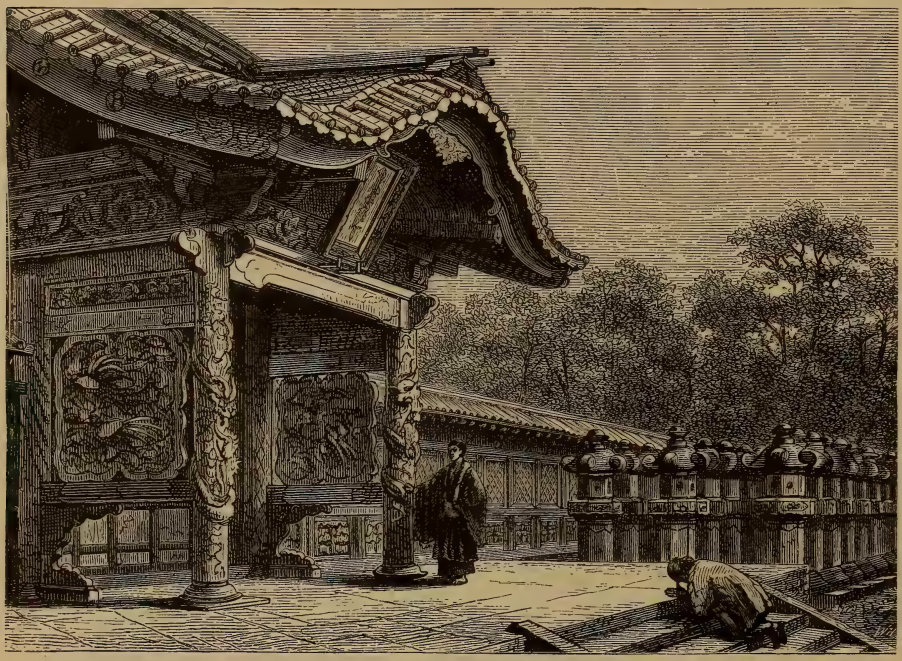
Temple Gateway at Isshinden, Japan.

the steamers belonging to the China Merchants' Company have eyes painted upon them in conformity to Chinese custom. The people believe that a ship without eyes cannot avoid accidents, and explain it thus: 'Got eye, can see, can savey; no got eye, no see, no savey.'

"Contrary to general belief junks can make long voyages, though they rarely go beyond what may be called their native seas of Japan, China, and Java. Several junks have been to Europe, and one at least came to New York thirty or forty years

ago, and was ultimately destroyed there by fire. The crew of this junk mostly remained in New York, and formed the basis of the present Chinese population of that city.

"With the Khan's fleet of junks we will sail to Chipangu, the Japan of to-day. As already mentioned, Japan was wholly unknown to Europe, and had never been heard of in any way until Marco gave an account of it. This is one of the parts of his



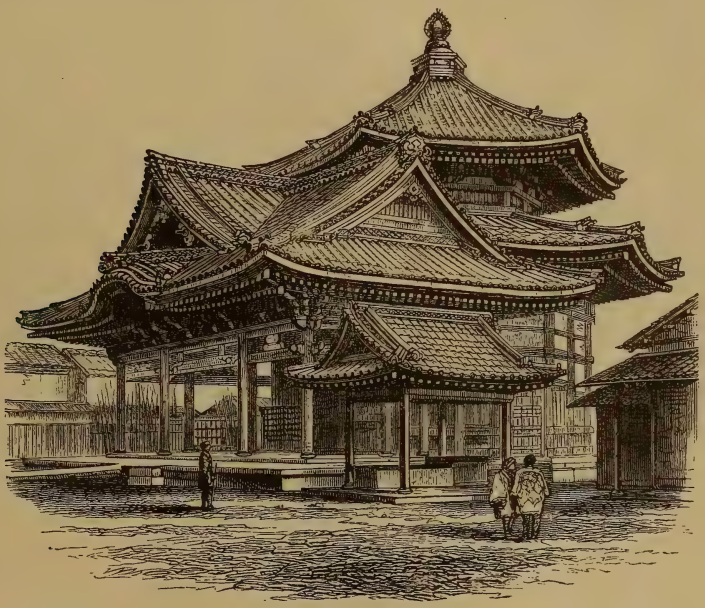
Entrance to Shrine of Seventh Shôgun, Tokio.

story which was rejected as fabulous, but has been verified by time.

"The story of the cheapness of gold was well founded, as that metal was nearly as abundant as silver. For a long time it was held at the same value, and when Japan was opened to the trade of foreign countries, after the expedition of Commodore Perry, the official relative values of gold and silver were three for one. Of course this condition of things was changed very quickly. The palace with a golden roof and with a floor of gold two inches

thick is an interesting fable. Palaces in Japan are noted for their inexpensive character; they often cover a large area, but are of modest exterior and no architectural beauty. The Japanese spend more money on their royal and imperial tombs than on their dwelling-places; the tombs of the *shoguns* or *taicoons* in Tokio and some of the shrines and memorials at Nikko and other places are models of mortuary resting-places.

"Kublai Khan made several efforts to conquer Japan, but was repulsed in all of them. Quite likely the story of the quarrels



Exterior of a Japanese Temple.

of the rival generals is true, but the capture of the city by the shipwrecked crew borders on the marvellous. Besides, there is no record of it in Japanese or Chinese histories. The belief in charms was prevalent in those days, and it is quite natural that Marco should tell the story of the wonderful preservation of eight soldiers of the garrison of the tower by reason of the small stones imbedded in their arms. The practice of imbedding these stones in the flesh still prevails in the Andaman Islands, and in Java, Sumatra, and other parts of the Eastern Archipelago.

"But I have taken a long time," said Fred, "for the comments on the opening chapters of the third book, and will now make way for Frank." Fred returned to his seat, and Frank resumed the narrative.

CONCERNING THE FASHION OF THE IDOLS.

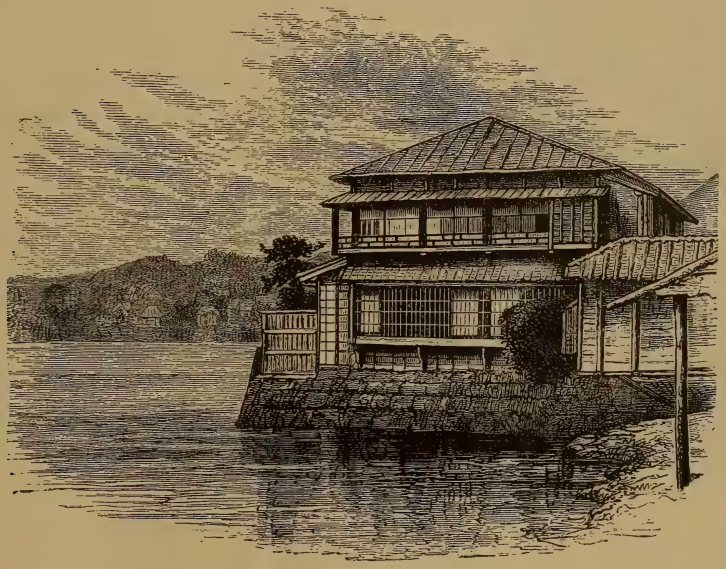
Now you must know that the Idols of Cathay, and of Manzi, and of this Island, are all of the same class. And in this Island as well as elsewhere, there be some of the Idols that have the head of an ox, some that have the head of a pig, some of a dog, some of a sheep, and some of divers other kinds. And some of them have four heads, whilst some have three, one growing out of either shoulder. There are also some that have four hands, some ten, some a thousand! And they do put more faith in those Idols that have a thousand hands than in any of the others. And when any Christian asks them why they make their Idols in so many different guises, and not all alike, they reply that just so their forefathers were wont to have them made, and just so they will leave them to their children, and these to the after generations. And so they will be handed down for ever. And you must understand that the deeds ascribed to these Idols are such a parcel of devilries as it is best not to tell. So let us have done with the Idols, and speak of other things.

But I must tell you one thing still concerning that Island (and 't is the same with the other Indian Islands), that if the natives take prisoner an enemy who cannot pay a ransom, he who hath the prisoner summons all his friends and relations, and they put the prisoner to death, and then they cook him and eat him, and they say there is no meat in the world so good!

The Sea in which lie the Islands of those parts is called the SEA OF CHIN, which is as much as to say, "The Sea over against Manzi." For, in the language of those Isles, when they say *Chin*, 't is Manzi they mean. And I tell you with regard to that Eastern Sea of Chin, according to what is said by the experienced pilots and mariners of those parts, there be 7,459 Islands in the waters frequented by the said mariners; and that is how they know the fact, for their whole life is spent in navigating that sea. And there is not one of those Islands but produces valuable and

odorous woods like the lignaloe, aye and better too; and they produce also a great variety of spices. For example in those Islands grows pepper as white as snow, as well as the black in great quantities. In fact the riches of those Islands is something wonderful, whether in gold or precious stones, or in all manner of spicery; but they lie so far off from the main land that it is hard to get to them. And when the ships of Zayton and Kinsay do voyage thither they make vast profits by their venture.

It takes them a whole year for the voyage, going in winter and returning in summer. For in that Sea there are but two winds that blow, the



House on the Shore.

one that carries them outward and the other that brings them homeward; and the one of these winds blows all the winter, and the other all the summer. And you must know these regions are so far from India that it takes a long time also for the voyage thence.

Though that Sea is called the Sea of Chin, as I have told you, yet it is part of the Ocean Sea all the same. But just as in these parts people talk of the Sea of England and the Sea of Rochelle, so in those countries they speak of the Sea of Chin and the Sea of India, and so on, though they all are are but parts of the Ocean.

Now let us have done with that region which is very inaccessible and out of the way. Moreover, Messer Marco Polo never was there. And let me tell you the Great Kaan has nothing to do with them, nor do they render him any tribute or service.

So let us go back to Zayton and take up the order of our book from that point.

OF THE GREAT COUNTRY CALLED CHAMBA.

You must know that on leaving the port of Zayton you sail west-south-west for 1500 miles, and then you come to a country called CHAMBA, a very rich region, having a king of its own. The people are Idolaters and pay a yearly tribute to the Great Kaan, which consists of elephants and nothing but elephants. And I will tell you how they came to pay this tribute.

Japanese Peasant.

It happened in the year 1278 that the Great Kaan sent a Baron of his called Sagatu, with a great force of horse and foot against this King of Chamba, and this Baron opened the war on a great scale against the King and his country.

Now the King, whose name was Accambale, was a very aged man, nor had he such a force as the Baron had. And when he saw what havoc the Baron was making with his kingdom he was grieved to the heart. So he bade messengers get ready and despatched them to the Great Kaan. And they said to the Kaan: "Our Lord the King of Chamba salutes you as his liege-lord, and would have you to know that he is stricken in years and long hath held his realm in peace. And now he sends you word by us that he is willing to be your liege-man, and will send you every year a tribute of as many elephants as you please. And he prays you in all gentleness and humility that you would send word to your Baron to desist from harrying his kingdom and to quit his territories. These shall henceforth be at your absolute disposal, and the King shall hold them of you."

When the Great Kaan had heard the King's ambassage he was moved with pity, and sent word to that Baron of his to quit that kingdom with his army, and to carry his arms to the conquest of some other country; and as soon as this command reached them they obeyed it. Thus it was then that this King became vassal of the Great Kaan, and paid him every year a tribute of 20 of the greatest and finest elephants that were to be found in the country.

In that kingdom no woman is allowed to marry until the King shall have seen her; if the woman pleases him then he takes her to wife; if she does not, he gives her a dowry to get her a husband withal. In the year 1285, Messer Marco Polo was in that country, and at that time the King had, between sons and daughters, 326 children, of whom at least 150 were men fit to carry arms.

There are very great numbers of elephants in this kingdom, and they have lignaloes in great abundance. They have also extensive forests of the wood called *Bonús*, which is jet-black, and of which chessmen and pen-cases are made.

Hairy Men of Northern Japan.

CONCERNING THE GREAT ISLAND OF JAVA.

When you sail from Chamba, 1500 miles in a course between south and south-east, you come to a great Island called JAVA. And the experienced mariners of those Islands who know the matter well, say that it is the greatest Island in the world, and has a compass of more than 3000 miles. It is subject to a great King and tributary to no one else in the world. The people are Idolaters. The Island is of surpassing wealth, producing black pepper, nutmegs, spikenard, galingale, cubebs, cloves, and all other kinds of spices.

This Island is also frequented by a vast amount of shipping, and by merchants who buy and sell costly goods from which they reap great profit. Indeed the treasure of this Island is so great as to be past telling.

And I can assure you the Great Kaan never could get possession of this Island, on account of its great distance, and the great expense of an expedition thither. The merchants of Zayton and Manzi draw annually great returns from this country.

WHEREIN THE ISLES OF SONDUR AND CONDUR ARE SPOKEN OF; AND THE KINGDOM OF LOCAC.

When you leave Chamba and sail for 700 miles on a course between south and south-west, you arrive at two Islands, a greater and a less.

A Family Party. (From a Native Sketch.)

The one is called SONDUR and the other CONDUR. As there is nothing about them worth mentioning, let us go on five hundred miles beyond Sondur, and then we find another country which is called LOCAC. It is a good country and a rich; it is on the mainland, and it has a king of its own. The people are Idolaters and have a peculiar language, and pay tribute to nobody, for their country is so situated that no one can enter it to do them ill. Indeed if it were possible to get at it, the Great Kaan would soon bring them under subjection to him.

In this country the brazil which we make use of grows in great plenty; and they also have gold in incredible quantity. They have elephants likewise, and much game. In this kingdom too are gathered all the porcelain shells which are used for small change in all those regions, as I have told you before.

There is nothing else to mention except that this is a very wild region, visited by few people; nor does the king desire that any stranger should frequent the country, and so find out about his treasure and other resources. We will now proceed, and tell you of something else.

Native Houses.

"The Sea of Chin," said Fred, "is very evidently the China Sea, which we can readily find on the maps, but probably its boundaries were far more vague in Polo's time than at present. The islands which he places in it are doubtless the Philippines, Moluccas, and other groups in the Malay Archipelago, but he goes beyond modern navigators in giving their number with such exactness. Nobody knows to-day the precise number of islands in the archipelago, and there is no likelihood of there ever being an agreement on the subject. The trouble arises from the fact that what are accounted islands by one navigator are called rocks by another. It is as difficult to draw the distinction between an

island and a rock as to fix the exact date when a kitten becomes a cat.

"By Chamba he evidently means Cochin China, which was known to Western Asiatics as Champa down to the fifteenth century. Elephants used to form part of the presents which the rulers of Indo-China sent as their tribute to the emperor, and the custom may have originated somewhat as he tells us. 'The wood called *Bonús*' is know to us as ebony, and derives its name

Scene in the Harbor of Bangkok, Siam.

from the Persian *Abnus*. Brazil, or Brazil wood, is known in the East by the Malay name *Sappan;* it is found in Chamba, but more abundantly in Siam and the Malay Peninsula.

"It is a pity that Marco has so little to tell us about Java, and more a pity that his brief information is not altogether correct. Java has a circuit of about half the three thousand miles he gives it; the island does not produce nutmegs or cloves, though they were probably taken there for a market as they are to-day; and if he means gold when he mentions treasure, he is

wrong, as no gold is found there. Kublai Khan attempted to conquer Java, but failed as badly as in his effort to subjugate Japan.

"Sondur and Condur you can find on a good map if you look for Pulo Condore. Pulo is a Malay word meaning 'island,' and you often find it as the prefix to names of islands in the Malay group. Locac, where they have gold in incredible quantities, elephants and much game, is the kingdom of Siam. Its enlightened ruler of to-day, Chulalonkorn I., is as independent of the Emperor of China as were his predecessors in their defiance of the great Kublai Khan. The present dynasty on the Siamese throne was founded in 1351, and its first king built the city of Ayuthia, whose ruins exist about a hundred miles north of Bangkok, the present capital."

"We will stop now," said Fred, "and at our next meeting will have more to tell you of the islands of the great Archipelago."

CHAPTER XX.

The Malay Peninsula—Sumatra—Island of the Dog-Headed Men—Strange Customs—Description of Ceylon—Abundance of Precious Stones—Adam's Peak—Story and Relics of Buddha—How the Great Khan Obtained Them—Teeth of Buddha at Kandy and Foochow.

FRANK was as prompt as usual in beginning the exercises of the next evening, and recounting the wonders of the Eastern Archipelago as described by Polo.

OF THE ISLAND CALLED PENTAM, AND THE CITY MALAIUR.

When you leave Locac and sail 500 miles towards the south, you come to an Island called PENTAM, a very wild place. All the wood that grows thereon consists of odoriferous trees. There is no more to say about it; so let us sail about sixty miles further between those two Islands. Throughout this distance there is but four paces' depth of water, so that great ships in passing this channel have to lift their rudders, for they draw nearly as much water as that.

And when you have gone these 60 miles, and again about 30 more, you come to an Island which forms a Kingdom, and is called MALAIUR. The people have a King of their own, and a peculiar language. The city is a fine and noble one, and there is great trade carried on there. All kinds of spicery are to be found there, and all other necessaries of life.

CONCERNING THE ISLAND OF JAVA THE LESS. THE KINGDOMS OF FERLEC AND BASMA.

When you leave the Island of Pentam and sail about 100 miles you reach the Island of JAVA THE LESS. For all its name 't is none so small but that it has a compass of two thousand miles or more. Now I will tell you all about this Island.

You see there are upon it eight kingdoms and eight crowned kings.

The people are all Idolaters, and every kingdom has a language of its own. The Island hath great abundance of treasure, with costly spices, lignaloes and spikenard and many others that never come into our parts.

Now I am going to tell you all about these eight kingdoms, or at least the greater part of them. But let me premise one marvellous thing, and that is the fact that this Island lies so far to the south that the North Star, little or much, is never to be seen!

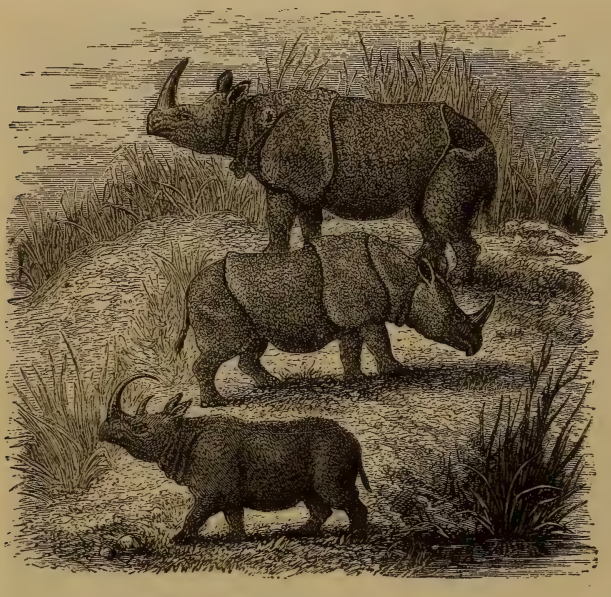
View in Java.

And first I will tell you of the kingdom of FERLEC.

This kingdom, you must know, is so much frequented by the Saracen merchants that they have converted the natives to the Law of Mahommet—I mean the townspeople only, for the hill-people live for all the world like beasts, and eat human flesh, as well as all other kinds of flesh, clean or unclean. And they worship this, that, and the other thing; for in fact the first thing that they see on rising in the morning, that they do worship for the rest of the day.

I will now tell of another kingdom which is called BASMA.

When you quit the kingdom of Ferlec you enter upon Basma. This also is an independent kingdom, and the people have a language of their own; but they are just like beasts without laws or religion. They call themselves subjects of the Great Kaan, but they pay him no tribute; indeed they are so far away that his men could not go thither. Still all these Islanders declare themselves to be his subjects, and sometimes they send him curiosities as presents. There are wild elephants in the country, and numerous unicorns, which are very nearly as big. They have hair like that of a buffalo, feet like those of an elephant, and a horn in the middle of the forehead, which is black and very thick. They do no mischief, however, with the horn, but with the tongue alone; for this is covered all over with long and strong prickles, and when savage with any one they crush him under their knees and then rasp him with their tongue. The head resembles that of a wild boar, and they carry it ever bent toward the ground. They delight much to abide in mire and mud. 'T is a passing ugly beast to look upon, and is not in the least like that which our stories tell of as being caught in the lap of a virgin; in fact, 't is altogether different from what we fancied. There are also monkeys here in great numbers and of sundry kinds; and goshawks as black as crows. These are very large birds and capital for fowling.



The Rhinoceros at Home.

I may tell you moreover that when people bring home pygmies which they allege to come from India, 't is all a lie and a cheat. For those

little men, as they call them, are manufactured on this Island, and I will tell you how. You see there is on the Island a kind of monkey which is very small, and has a face just like a man's. They take these, and pluck out all the hair except the hair of the beard and on the breast, and then they dry them and stuff them and daub them with saffron and other things until they look like men. But you see it is all a cheat; for nowhere in India nor anywhere else in the world were there ever men seen so small as these pretended pygmies.

Plants of Sumatra.

THE KINGDOMS OF SAMARA AND DAGROIAN.

When you leave Basma you come to another kingdom called Samara, on the same Island. And in that kingdom Messer Marco Polo was detained five months by the weather, which would not allow of his going on. And I tell you that here again neither the Pole-star nor the stars of the Maestro were to be seen, much or little. The people here are wild Idolaters; they have a king who is great and rich; but they also call themselves subjects of the Great Kaan. When Messer Mark was detained on this Island five months by contrary winds, he landed with about 2000 men in his company; they dug large ditches on the landward side to encompass the party, resting at either end on the sea-haven, and

within these ditches they made bulwarks or stockades of timber for fear of those brutes of man-eaters; for there is great store of wood there; and the islanders having confidence in the party supplied them with victuals and other things needful. There is abundance of fish to be had, the best in the world. The people have no wheat, but live on rice. Nor have they any wine except such as I shall now describe.

They derive it from a certain kind of tree that they have. When they want wine they cut a branch of this, and attach a great pot to the stem of the tree at the place where the branch was cut; in a day and a night they will find the pot filled. This wine is excellent drink, and is got both white and red. It is of such surpassing virtue that it cures dropsy and tisick and spleen. The trees resemble small date-palms; * * * and when cutting a branch no longer gives a flow of wine they water the root of the tree, and before long the branches again begin to give out wine as before. They have also great quantities of Indian nuts as big as a man's head, which are good to eat when fresh, being sweet and savory and white as milk. The inside of the meat of the nut is filled with a liquor like clear fresh water, but better to the taste, and more delicate than wine or any other drink that ever existed.

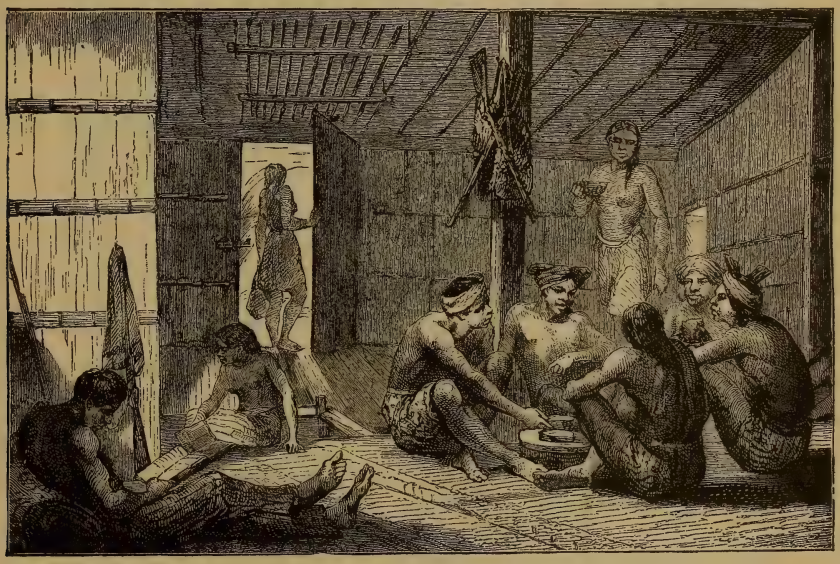
When you leave Samara you come to another which is called DAGROIAN. It is an independent kingdom, and has a language of its own. The people are very wild, but they call themselves the subjects of the Great Kaan. I will tell you a wicked custon of theirs.

When one of them is ill they send for their sorcerers, and put the question to them, whether the sick man shall recover from his sickness or no. If they say that he will recover, then they let him alone till he gets better. But if the sorcerers foretell that the sick man is to die, the friends send for certain judges of theirs to put to death him who has thus been condemned by the sorcerers to die. These men come, and lay so many clothes upon the sick man's mouth that they suffocate him. And when he is dead they have him cooked, and gather together all the dead man's kin, and eat him. And when they have eaten him they collect his bones and put them in fine chests, and carry them away, and place them in caverns among the mountains where no beast or other creature can get at them. And you must know also that if they take prisoner a man of

another country, and he cannot pay a ransom in coin, they kill him and eat him straightway.

OF THE KINGDOMS OF LAMBRI AND FANSUR.

When you leave that kingdom you come to another which is called LAMBRI. The people have plenty of Camphor and of all sorts of other spices. They also have brazil in great quantities. This they sow, and when it is grown to the size of a small shoot they take it up and transplant it; then they let it grow for three years, after which they tear it up by the root. In this kingdom there are men with tails; these tails are of



Interior of a Native House.

a palm in length, and have no hair on them. These people live in the mountains and are a kind of wild men. Their tails are about the thickness of a dog's. There are also plenty of unicorns in that country, and abundance of game in birds and beasts.

You then come to another kingdom which is called FANSUR. The people are Idolaters, and also call themselves subjects of the Great Kaan; and understand, they are still on the same Island that I have been telling you of. In Fansur grows the best Camphor in the world, called *Canfora Fansuri.* It is so fine that it sells for its weight in fine gold.

An Elephant Ride in a Tropical Forest.

The people have no wheat, but have rice which they eat with milk and flesh. They also have wine from trees such as I told you of. And I will tell you another great marvel. They have a kind of trees that produce flour, and excellent flour it is for food. These trees are very tall and thick, but have a very thin bark, and inside the bark they are crammed with flour. And I tell you that Messer Marco Polo, who witnessed all this, related how he and his party did sundry times partake of this flour made into bread, and found it excellent.

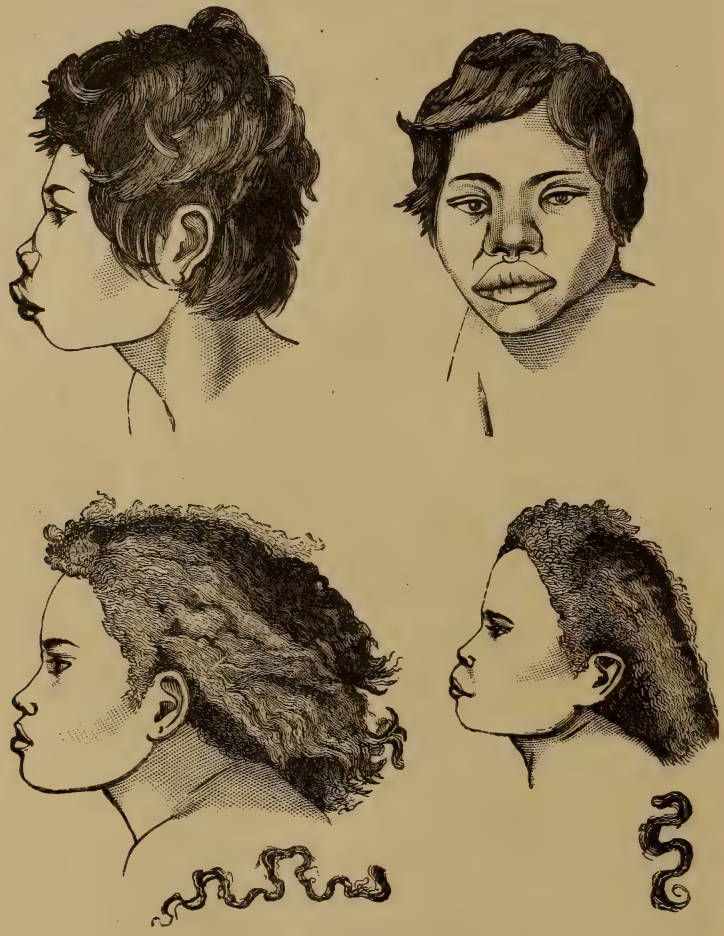
I shall tell you nothing about the other two kingdoms that are at the other side of the Island, for the said Messer Marco Polo never was there. Howbeit we have told you about the greater part of this Island of the Lesser Java; so now we will quit it.

CONCERNING THE ISLAND OF NECUVERAN.

When you leave the Island of Java (the less) and the kingdom of Lambri, you sail north about 150 miles, and then you come to two Islands, one of which is called NECUVERAN. In this Island they have no king nor chief, but live like beasts. And I tell you they go all naked, both men and women, and do not use the slightest covering of any kind. They are Idolaters. Their woods are all of noble and valuable kinds of trees; such as Red Sanders and Indian-nut and Cloves and Brazil and sundry other good spices.

"There is no difficulty in identifying most of the places mentioned in what Frank has just read to us," said Fred, as he gave a hasty glance at his notes. "The island called Pentam is generally marked Bintang on our maps, and is more properly Bentan. Don't confound it with Bantam, the province of the western end of Java, whose name has become familiar to us in the Bantam fowls that abound in many poultry yards. Bintang is at the eastern end of the Straits of Malacca, and produces a considerable variety of spiced woods as Polo describes. Malaiur is the southern extremity of the Malay Peninsula, and Marco is in error when he calls it an island. The shallow passage he speaks of is the strait which separates Singapore from the main-

land; it is navigable only for small craft and tigers. The latter frequently swim over from the mainland to Singapore to feed upon the inhabitants of the island, and in some years as many as three hundred of the people have been killed by these ferocious



Wild Races of the Malay Peninsula.

beasts. Col. Yule thinks that the narrow passage is the channel separating Singapore from Bintang, and not the one where the tigers cross from the mainland.

"Java the Less is the great island of Sumatra, and Marco has stated its circumference somewhat under the actual figures.

The inhabitants are now, as in his day, divided into several kingdoms independent of each other; a part of the island has been occupied by the Dutch, and is within the government of the Netherlands East Indies. The Dutch occupation is by no means a peaceful one, and many of you have read in the past few years of the war between the Dutch and the people of Acheen, an independent province at the western end of the island. Most of the natives are Moslems, but they do not hold closely to the faith, especially in the interior of the island. There were doubtless

Malay Youth and Maiden.

more than eight kingdoms or principalities in Sumatra in Polo's time, but it is evident that his information about them was not very distinct."

Some one asked if there are cannibals in Sumatra at present, and if their practices resemble those mentioned by Marco.

"Our information on this subject is not very precise," replied Fred, "but, according to the testimony of several travellers and the Dutch officials, the horrible custom of eating human flesh still prevails among the Battas, a warlike people occupying the high table-lands of the interior. It is governed by fixed rules,

however, which are well understood throughout the country. Men convicted of certain crimes are condemned to be eaten, and so are prisoners in war captured outside their villages; those taken within their villages are spared. Traitors and spies are to be eaten, but may be ransomed for sixty dollars each. In all the part of Sumatra occupied by the Dutch the custom has been abolished and will probably disappear altogether before many years.

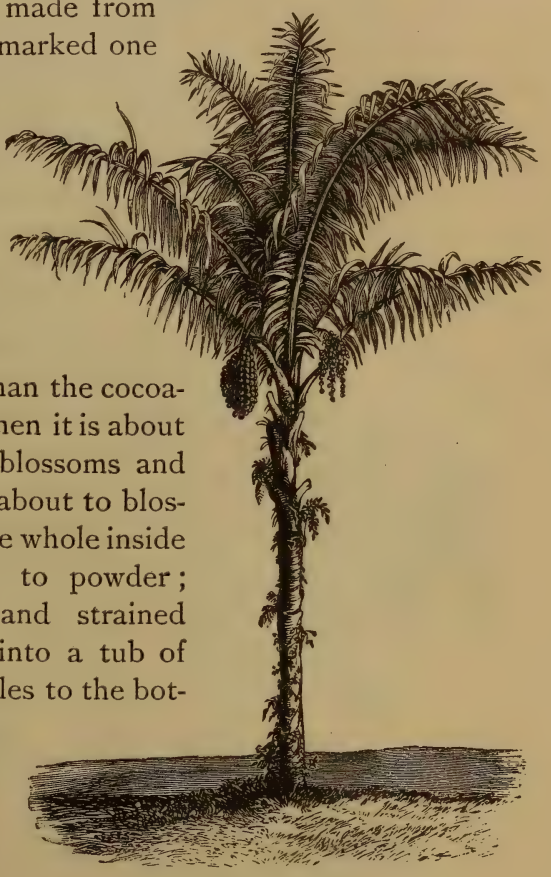
"The elephant abounds in Sumatra, and so does the rhinoceros, which is the unicorn of Polo. The fondness of the rhinoceros for lying in the mud is well known to the natives, and they take advantage of it in hunting him. He lies there with only part of his head visible. When the mud becomes dry and crusty in summer he cannot get out of it without much difficulty, and at such times the natives prepare large quantities of dry brushwood, approach quietly and build a large fire over their prey before he is aware what they are about. They continue to pile on fresh fuel, and he is cooked and made ready for eating in the spot where he was taking a comfortable nap. Marco relates an old fable in describing the use which the rhinoceros makes of his tongue.

"Monkeys of several kinds, and tropical birds and animals in great variety are found in Sumatra, and if time permitted I could give you an evening's lecture concerning them. The Samara of Polo is doubtless Sumatra, by which name the southern part of the island was then called, and he is quite correct in saying that neither the north star nor the *Maestro* (Great Bear constellation) is visible from there. The tree which produces wine is the toddy-palm, called *Gomuti* by the Malays. The juice is fermented till it forms an intoxicating drink called "toddy," or it may be boiled down till it granulates into sugar. The horrible treatment of the sick which our author mentions is probably without foundation, though the story has been repeated down to the present time, and is still current. It is always told regarding a people at a distance, and generally of a tribe hostile to the one where the information is obtained.

"Lambri and Fansur cannot be clearly identified, nor is there any thing authentic concerning the men with tails, though such stories have been current through all ages, and in different parts of the world. Camphor is abundant in Sumatra, and so is sago, which Marco describes under the name of flour obtained from trees."

"I thought sago was made from a plant like a potato," remarked one of the boys who sat near Fred.

"Not at all," answered the youth; "you are probably thinkng of the yam, from which a sort of flour is made. Sago is made from a species of palm, thicker and larger than the cocoa-palm, but not so tall. When it is about fifteen years old the tree blossoms and then dies. Just as it is about to blossom it is cut down and the whole inside of the trunk is reduced to powder; this powder is washed and strained through a coarse sieve into a tub of water, where the sago settles to the bottom and is secured. It is afterwards formed into cakes and dried in an oven, and when thoroughly dried it can be kept for years. One tree will produce from 800 to 1,000 pounds of sago; this will support a man a year, and two men can reduce a tree to sago in five days. Consequently in the sago country ten days' labor annually is sufficient for a man's support.



Gomuti Palm.

"In regard to the inhabitants of Necuveran, which was

Native House and Bathing Pool.

probably the Nicobar group, the Chinese have a curious tradition. They say that when Buddha passed that way he stopped at the Nicobar Islands to bathe, and while he was in the water the natives stole his clothes. In revenge he ordained that they never should be permitted to wear any clothing, and his decree has continued in force till the present time.

"I am now about to sit down," said Fred, "and you will hear from Frank again. He will first read about Angamanain, by which Marco means the Andaman Islands, which are occupied by a very barbarous people. They are small in stature and particularly ugly, and it is probably for this reason that they were reputed to have heads like dogs. Pictures of dog-headed men are in existence, and for a long time the story concerning them was believed. Marco is wrong when he says they have rice and milk, as they have neither; they have some fruits but not many. They are reputed to be cannibals, and are certainly among the most inhospitable people in the East. The English Government has had for some time a penal colony on the Andaman Islands, and some efforts have been made to civilize the natives, but without success."

All were intent to heat from Polo's narrative the description of this curious race, and there was perfect silence as Frank proceeded.

CONCERNING THE ISLAND OF ANGAMANAIN.

ANGAMANAIN is a very large Island. The people are without a king and are Idolaters, and no better than wild beasts. And I assure you all the men of this Island of Angamanain have heads like dogs, and teeth and eyes likewise; in fact, in the face they are all just like big mastiff dogs! They have a quantity of spices; but they are a most cruel generation, and eat everybody that they can catch, if not of their own race. They live on flesh and rice and milk, and have fruits different from any of ours.

CONCERNING THE ISLAND OF SEILAN.

When you leave the Island of Angamanain and sail about a thousand miles in a direction a little south of west, you come to the Island of

SEILAN, which is in good sooth the best Island of its size in the world. You must know that it has a compass of 2,400 miles, but in old times it was greater still, for it then had a circuit of about 3,600 miles, as you find in the charts of the mariners of those seas. But the north wind there blows with such strength that it has caused the sea to submerge a large part of the Island; and that is the reason why it is not so big now as it used to be. On the side where the north wind strikes, the Island is very low and flat, insomuch that in approaching on board ship from the high seas you do not see the land till you are right upon it.

They have a king there whom they call SENDEMAIN, and are tributary to nobody. The people are Idolaters, and go quite naked except that they cover the middle. They have no wheat, but have rice, and sesamum of which they make their oil. They live on flesh and milk, and have tree-wine such as I have told you of. And they have brazil-wood, much the best in the world.

Rubies are found in this Island and in no other country in the world but this. They find there also sapphires and topazes and amethysts, and many other stones of price. And the King of this Island possesses a ruby which is the finest and biggest in the world; I will tell you what it is like. It is about a palm in length, and as thick as a man's arm; to look at, it is the most resplendent object upon earth; it is quite free from flaw and as red as fire. Its value is so great that a price for it in money could hardly be named at all. You must know that the Great Kaan sent an embassy and begged the King as a favor greatly desired by him to sell him this ruby, offering to give for it the ransom of a city, or in fact what the King would. But the King replied that on no account whatever would he sell it, for it had come to him from his ancestors.

The people of Seilan are no soldiers, but poor cowardly creatures. And when they have need of soldiers they get Saracen troops from foreign parts.

THE SAME CONTINUED. THE HISTORY OF SAGAMONI BORCAN AND THE BEGINNING OF IDOLATRY.

Furthermore you must know that in the Island of Seilan there is an exceeding high mountain; it rises right up so steep and precipitous that

River Scene in Ceylon.

no one could ascend it, were it not that they have taken and fixed to it several great and massive iron chains, so disposed that by help of these men are able to mount to the top. And I tell you they say that on this mountain is the sepulchre of Adam our first parent; at least that is what the Saracens say. But the Idolaters say it is the sepulchre of SAGAMONI BORCAN, before whose time there were no idols. They hold him to have been the best of men, a great saint in fact, according to their fashion, and the first in whose name idols were made.

He was the son, as their story goes, of a great and wealthy king. And he was of such an holy temper that he would never listen to any worldly talk, nor would he consent to be king. And when the father saw that his son would not be king, nor yet take any part in affairs, he took it sorely to heart. And first he tried to tempt him with great promises, offering to crown him king, and to surrender all authority into his hands. The son, however, would none of his offers; so the father was in great trouble, and all the more that he had no other son but him, to whom he might bequeath the kingdom at his own death. So, after taking thought on the matter, the King caused a great palace to be built, and placed his son therein, and caused him to be waited on there by a number of maidens, the most beautiful that could anywhere be found. And he ordered them to divert themselves with the prince, and to sing and dance before him, so as to draw his heart towards worldly enjoyments. But 't was all of no avail, and he only abode the firmer in his goodness, leading a most holy life, after their manner thereof. And I assure you he was so staid a youth that he had never gone out of the palace, and thus he had never seen a dead man, nor any one who was not hale and sound; for the father never allowed any man that was aged or infirm to come into his presence. It came to pass however one day that the young gentleman took a ride, and by the roadside he beheld a dead man. The sight dismayed him greatly, as he never had seen such a sight before. Incontinently he demanded of those who were with him what thing that was? and then they told him it was a dead man. "How, then," quoth the king's son, "do all men die?" "Yea, forsooth," said they. Whereupon the young gentleman said never a word, but rode on right pensively. And after he had ridden a good way he fell in with

a very aged man who could no longer walk, and had not a tooth in his head, having lost all because of his great age. And when the king's son beheld this old man he asked what that might mean, and wherefore the man could not walk? Those who were with him replied that it was through old age the man could walk no longer, and had lost all his teeth. And so when the king's son had thus learned about the dead man and about the aged man, he turned back to his palace and said to himself that he would abide no longer in this evil world, but would go in search of Him Who dieth not, and Who had created him.

So what did he one night but take his departure from the palace privily, and betake himself to certain lofty and pathless mountains. And there he did abide, leading a life of great hardship and sanctity, and keeping great abstinence, just as if he had been a Christian. Indeed, an he had but been so, he would have been a great saint of Our Lord Jesus Christ, so good and pure was the life he led. And when he died they found his body and brought it to his father. And when the father saw dead before him that son whom he loved better than himself, he was near going distraught with sorrow. And he caused an image in the similitude of his son to be wrought in gold and precious stones, and caused all his people to adore it. And they all declared him to be a god; and so they still say.

They tell moreover that he hath died fourscore and four times. The first time he died as a man, and came to life again as an ox; and then he died as an ox and came to life again as a horse, and so on until he had died fourscore and four times; and every time he became some kind of animal. But when he died the eighty-fourth time they say he became a god. And they do hold him for the greatest of all their gods. And they tell that the aforesaid image of him was the first idol that the Idolaters ever had; and from that have originated all the other idols. And this befel in the Island of Seilan in India.

The Idolaters come thither on pilgrimage from very long distances and with great devotion, just as Christians go to the shrine of Messer Saint James in Gallicia. And they maintain that the monument on the mountain is that of the king's son, according to the story I have been telling you; and that the teeth, and the hair, and the dish that are there

Smoking Mosquitoes in a Malay House.

were those of the same king's son, whose name was Sagamoni Borcan, or Sagamoni the Saint. But the Saracens also come thither on pilgrimage in great numbers, and *they* say that it is the sepulchre of Adam our first father, and that the teeth, and the hair, and the dish were those of Adam.

Whose they were in truth, God knoweth; howbeit, according to the Holy Scripture of our Church, the sepulchre of Adam is not in that part of the world.

Now it befel that the Great Kaan heard how on that mountain there was the sepulchre of our first father Adam, and that some of his hair and of his teeth, and the dish from which he used to eat, were still preserved there. So he thought he would get hold of them somehow or another, and despatched a great embassy for the purpose, in the year 1284. The ambassadors, with a great company, travelled on by sea and by land until they arrived at the island of Seilan, and presented themselves before the king. And they were so urgent with him that they succeeded in getting two of the grinder teeth, which were passing great and thick; and they also got some of the hair, and the dish from which that personage used to eat, which is of a very beautiful green porphyry. And when the Great Kaan's ambassadors had attained the object for which they had come they were greatly rejoiced, and returned to their lord. And when they drew near to the great city of Cambaluc, where the Great Kaan was staying, they sent him word that they had brought back that for which he had sent them. On learning this the Great Kaan was passing glad, and ordered all the ecclesiastics and others to go forth to meet these reliques, which he was led to believe were those of Adam.

And why should I make a long story of it? In sooth, the whole population of Cambaluc went forth to meet those reliques, and the ecclesiastics took them over and carried them to the Great Kaan, who received them with great joy and reverence. And they find it written in their Scriptures that the virtue of that dish is such that if food for one man be put therein it shall become enough for five men; and the Great Kaan averred that he had proved the thing and found that it was really true.

So now you have heard how the Great Kaan came by those reliques and a mighty great treasure it did cost him! The reliques being, according to the Idolaters, those of that king's son.

"Polo's account of Ceylon," said Fred, "is correct in nearly all its details. Rice grows there abundantly. Drink is made from the juice of the toddy-palm, sapan-wood is in the forests, and the island has long been famous for its product of precious stones. Rubies, sapphires, amethysts, carbuncles, and cat's-eyes are found there, and in some of the rivers garnets take the place of the ordinary sands of a flowing stream. Probably the great ruby he describes had only a mythical existence, but the story has been current through many ages, and he is not to be censured for repeating it. He is right in describing the people as lacking the military spirit; they are not good soldiers, and the armies of Ceylon under the native kings were conquered by one tenth their number of foreigners.

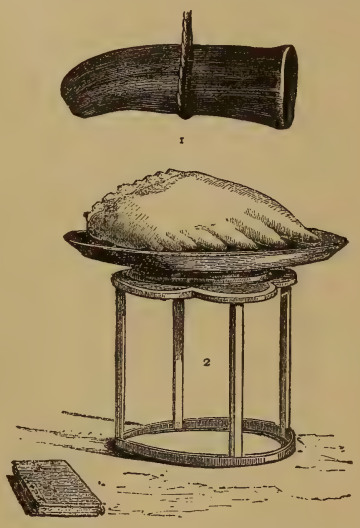
"The mountain he describes is Adam's Peak; it is steep and high as he represents, but it is not the highest mountain on the island. The chains are still there, and so is the temple on the summit; also the footprint, which seems to be a natural indentation in the rock about five feet long and fashioned to represent a human foot. The pilgrimages of three classes of religionists are made to the temple on Adam's Peak,—by Mohammedans and Malabar Christians in honor of Adam, and by Buddhists in reverence for the founder of their religion. The tradition is that Adam (or Buddha) made the footprint in the solid rock when he stepped from Ceylon to Burmah. He had previously come from India over the straits separating Ceylon from the mainland; there is a series of islands and rocks across the straits, and it is here that he crossed by stepping from one to another. In proof of the correctness of the story this chain of islands and rocks bears the name of 'Adam's Bridge.'

Adam's Peak, Ceylon.

"The story of the early history of Buddha is very well told

here ; if you wish to read further about it I refer you to Edwin Arnold's 'Light of Asia.' Sagamoni Borcan is Sakya-Muni, or Gautama-Buddha ; *Burkhan* means 'divinity,' and is used by the Mongols as the synonym of Buddha. The scene of the story should be located in India rather than in Ceylon, as it is not at all clear that Sakya-Muni was ever in that island. According to the most careful students of the religion it began in the north of India during the sixth century before our era, or about 2,400 years ago. Its founder may have travelled to Ceylon, but there is no record that he did so.

"At Kandy, the capital of Ceylon, there is a temple in which a tooth of Buddha is kept as a sacred relic. The shrine containing it is only opened on rare occasions, and at such times the people come from far and near to see it. No one is permitted to touch it, but for some years after the capture of Kandy by the British the tooth was in their possession and was carefully examined. It proved to be nothing but a piece of ivory about two inches long, which had become yellow with age and possibly from lying so long on the golden lotos flower that supports it. Formerly they kept another relic of Buddha in Ceylon which passed through many countries ; and it was the alms-bowl of Buddha, and possessed wonderful properties. A poor man could fill it with a few flowers, but a rich man could not do so with ten thousand bushels of rice ! An army could drink from it without reducing the quantity of liquid it contained ! It is doubtless this alms-bowl that is mentioned by Polo, and it would be interesting to know what became of it after its departure from Cambaluc.



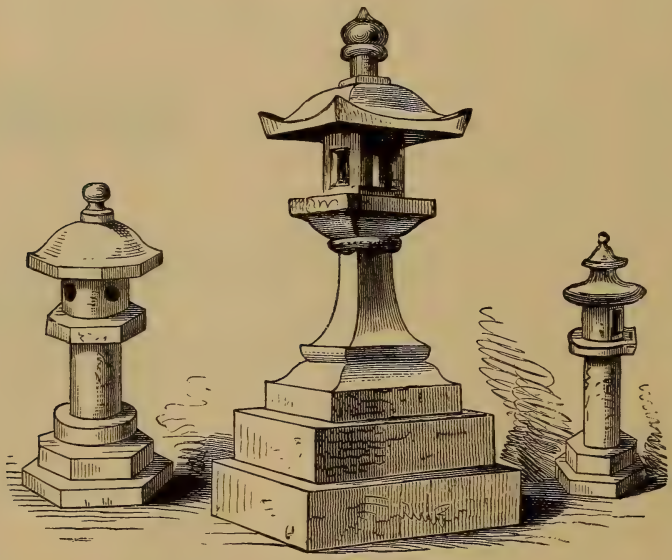
Teeth of Buddha. 1 at Kandy, 2 at Foochow.

"There is another tooth of Buddha at Foochow, which is

preserved in one of the temples there. It is about six inches long and shaped on the top like a tooth, but the other end conveys very little idea of the roots of a molar or any other dental formation.

"Much more could be said on the subject of Buddhistic relics," said Fred, "but our time is exhausted, and I will pause. On our next evening you will hear something about India."

In compliance with Fred's suggestion the session came to an end, and in a little while the members of the Society were on their homeward way.



Stone Lanterns near a Buddhist Temple.

CHAPTER XXI.

The Pearl Fisheries of Ceylon—The Province of Maabar—Southern India—Saint Thomas—Manners and Customs in India—Diamond Mines of Golconda—The *Koh-i-Noor*.

THE interest in the travels of Marco Polo continued as great as ever if we are to judge by the attendance on the next evening. There was not a vacant seat in Dr. Allen's library when Frank rose to read the description of India which had been promised as part of the entertainment. The young man announced that he was about to describe the pearl fishery of Ceylon, of which most of them had doubtless heard. "It is carried on to-day," said he, "in almost precisely the same way as in Polo's time. The Bettelar of our traveller, where the fishers have their head-quarters, is probably Patlam, on the coast of Ceylon. The shark-charmers are still employed there, and they belong to one family which is supposed to possess the monopoly of the spell. The principal charmer is paid by government, and receives in addition ten oysters daily from each boat during the fishery."

CONCERNING THE GREAT PROVINCE OF MAABAR, WHICH IS CALLED INDIA THE GREATER, AND IS ON THE MAINLAND.

When you leave the the Island of Seilan and sail westward about 60 miles, you come to the great province of MAABAR which is styled INDIA THE GREATER; it is the best of all the Indies and is on the mainland.

In this province there are five kings, who are own brothers. I will tell you about each in turn. The Province is the finest and noblest in the world.

At this end of the Province reigns one of those five Royal Brothers, who is a crowned King, and his name is SONDER BANDI DAVAR. In this kingdom they find very fine and great pearls; and I will tell you how they are got.

The sea here forms a gulf between the Island of Seilan and the mainland. And all round this gulf the water has a depth of no more than 10 or 12 fathoms, and in some places no more than two fathoms. The pearl-fishers take their vessels, great and small, and proceed into this gulf, where they stop from the beginning of April till the middle of May. They go first to a place called BETTELAR, and then go 60 miles into the gulf. Here they cast anchor and shift from their large vessels into small boats. The merchants divide into various companies, and each of these must engage a number of men on wages, hiring them for April and half of May. Of all the produce they have first to pay the King, as his royalty, the tenth part. And they must also pay those men who charm the great fishes, to prevent them from injuring the divers whilst engaged in seeking pearls under water, one twentieth part of all that they take. These fish-charmers are termed *Abraiaman;* and their charm holds good for that day only, for at night they dissolve the charm so that the fishes can work mischief at their will. These Abraiaman know also how to charm beasts and birds and every living thing. When the men have got into the small boats they jump into the water and dive to the bottom, which may be at a depth of from 4 to 12 fathoms, and there they remain as long as they are able. And there they find the shells that contain the pearls, and these they put into a net bag tied round the waist, and mount up to the surface with them, and then dive anew. When they can't hold their breath any longer they come up again, and after a little down they go

Native of Southern India.

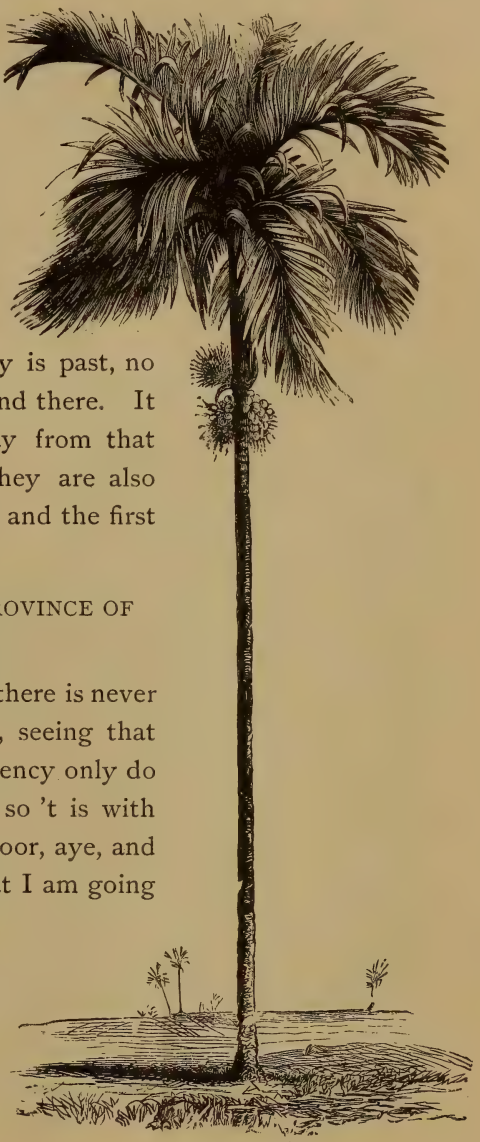
once more, and so they go on all day. These shells are in fashion like oysters or sea-hoods. And in these shells are found pearls, great and small, of every kind, sticking in the flesh of the shell-fish.

In this manner pearls are fished in great quantities, for thence in fact come the pearls which are spread all over the world. And the King of that State hath a very great receipt and treasure from his dues upon those pearls.

As soon as the middle of May is past, no more of those pearl-shells are found there. It is true, however, that a long way from that spot, some 300 miles distant, they are also found; but that is in September and the first half of October.

CONTINUES TO SPEAK OF THE PROVINCE OF MAABAR.

In all this Province of Maabar there is never a Tailor to cut a coat or stitch it, seeing that everybody goes naked! For decency only do they wear a scrap of cloth; and so 't is with men and women, with rich and poor, aye, and with the King himself, except what I am going to mention.



The Areca Palm.

It is a fact that the King goes as bare as the rest, only round his loins he has a piece of fine cloth, and round his neck he has a necklace entirely of precious stones,—rubies, sapphires, emeralds, and the like, insomuch that this collar is of great value. He wears also hanging in front of his chest from the neck downwards a fine silk thread strung with 104

large pearls and rubies of great price. The reason why he wears this cord with the 104 great pearls and rubies is (according to what they tell), that every day, morning and evening, he has to say 104 prayers to his idols. Such is their religion and their custom. And thus did all the Kings his ancestors before him, and they bequeathed the string of pearls to him that he should do the like. The prayer that they say daily consists of these words: *Pacauta ! Pacauta ! Pacauta !* And this they repeat 104 times.

The King aforesaid also wears on his arms three golden bracelets thickly set with pearls of great value, and anklets also of like kind he wears on his legs, and rings on his toes likewise. So let me tell you what this King wears, between gold and gems and pearls, is worth more than a city's ransom. And 't is no wonder; for he hath great store of such gear; and besides they are found in his kingdom. Moreover, nobody is permitted to take out of the kingdom a pearl weighing more than half a *saggio*, unless he manages to do it secretly. This order has been given because the King desires to reserve all such to himself; and so in fact the quantity he has is something almost incredible. Moreover, several times every year he sends his proclamation through the realm that if any one who possesses a pearl or stone of great value will bring it to him, he will pay for it twice as much as it cost. Everybody is glad to do this, and thus the King gets all into his own hands, giving every man his price.

Furthermore, this King hath some five hundred wives, for whenever he hears of a beautiful damsel he takes her to wife. The King hath many children.

And there are about the King a number of Barons in attendance upon him. These ride with him, and keep always near him, and have great authority in the kingdom; they are called the King's Trusty Lieges. And you must know that when the King dies, and they put him on the fire to burn him, these Lieges cast themselves into the fire round about his body, and suffer themselves to be burnt along with him. For they say they have been his comrades in this world, and that they ought also to keep him company in the other world.

When the King dies none of his children dares to touch his treasure. For they say: "As our father did gather together all this treasure, so we ought to accumulate as much in our turn." And in this way it comes to

Street in a Native Village.

pass that there is an immensity of treasure accumulated in this kingdom.

Here are no horses bred; and thus a great part of the wealth of the country is wasted in purchasing horses; I will tell you how. The merchants of KIS and HORMES, DOFAR and SOER and ADEN collect great numbers of destriers and other horses, and these they bring to the territories of this King and of his four brothers, who are kings likewise as I told you. For a horse will fetch among them 500 *saggi* of gold, worth more than 100 marks of silver, and vast numbers are sold there every year, Indeed this King wants to buy more than 2000 horses every year, and so do his four brothers who are kings likewise. The reason why they want so many horses every year is that by the end of the year there shall not be one hundred of them remaining, for they all die off. And this arises from mismanagement, for those people do not know in the least how to treat a horse; and besides they have no farriers. The horse-merchants not only never bring any farriers with them, but also prevent any farrier from going thither, lest they should in any degree baulk the sale of horses, which brings them in every year such vast gains. They bring these horses by sea aboard ship.

They have in this country the custom which I am going to relate. When a man is doomed to die for any crime, he may declare that he will put himself to death in honor of such or such an idol; and the government then grants him permission to do so. His kinsfolk and friends then set him up on a cart, and provide him with twelve knives, and proceed to conduct him all about the city, proclaiming aloud: "This valiant man is going to slay himself for the love of (such an idol)." And when they be come to the place of execution he takes a knife and sticks it through his arm, and cries: "I slay myself for the love of (such a god)!" Then he takes another knife and sticks it through his other arm, and takes a third knife and runs it into his breast, and so on until he kills himself outright. And when he is dead his kinsfolk take the body and burn it with a joyful celebration. Many of the women also, when their husbands die and are placed on the pile to be burnt, do burn themselves along with the bodies. And such women as do this have great praise from all.

The people are Idolaters, and many of them worship the ox, because

Sub-Tropical Houses of Modern Times.

(say they) it is a creature of such excellence. They would not eat beef for any thing in the world, nor would they on any account kill an ox. But there is another class of people who are called *Govy*, and these are very glad to eat beef, though they dare not kill the animal. Howbeit if an ox dies, naturally or otherwise, then they eat him.

And let me tell you, the people of this country all of them, great and small, King and Barons included, do sit upon the ground only, and the reason they give is that this is the most honorable way to sit, because we all spring from the Earth and to the Earth we must return; so no one can pay the Earth too much honor, and no one ought to despise it.

And about that race of *Govis*, I should tell you that nothing on earth would induce them to enter the place where Messer St. Thomas is—I mean where his body lies, which is in a certain city of the province of Maabar. Indeed, were even 20 or 30 men to lay hold of one of these *Govis* and to try to hold him in the place where the Body of the Blessed Apostle lies buried, they could not do it! Such is the influence of the Saint; for it was by people of this generation that he was slain, as you shall presently hear.

No wheat grows in this province, but rice only.

The people of the country go to battle all naked, with only a lance and a shield; and they are most wretched soldiers. They will kill neither beast nor bird, nor any thing that hath life; and for such animal food as they eat, they make the Saracens, or others who are not of their own religion, play the butcher.

It is their practice that every one, male and female, do wash the whole body twice every day; and those who do not wash are looked on much as we look on the Patarins. You must know also that in eating they use the right hand only, and would on no account touch their food with the left hand. So also they drink only from drinking vessels, and every man hath his own; nor will any one drink from another's vessel. And when they drink they do not put the vessel to the lips, but hold it aloft and let the drink spout into the mouth. No one would on any account touch the vessel with his mouth, nor give a stranger a drink with it. But if the stranger have no vessel of his own they will pour the drink into his hands and he may thus drink from his hands as from a cup.

They are very strict in executing justice upon criminals, and as strict in abstaining from wine. Indeed, they have made a rule that wine-drinkers and seafaring men are never to be accepted as sureties. For they say that to be a seafaring man is all the same as to be an utter desperado, and that his testimony is good for nothing.

They have the following rule about debts. If a debtor shall have been several times asked by his creditor for payment, and shall have put him off from day to day with promises, then if the creditor can once meet the debtor and succeed in drawing a circle round him, the latter must not pass out of this circle until he shall have satisfied the claim, or given security for its discharge. If he in any other case presume to pass the circle, he is punished with death as a transgressor against right and justice. And the said Messer Marco, when in this kingdom on his return home, did himself witness a case of this. It was the King, who owed a foreign merchant a certain sum of money, and though the claim had often been presented, he always put it off with promises. Now, one day when the King was riding through the city, the merchant found his opportunity, and drew a circle round both King and horse. The King, on seeing this, halted, and would ride no further; nor did he stir from the spot until the merchant was satisfied. And when the bystanders saw this they marvelled greatly, saying that the King was a most just King indeed, having thus submitted to justice.

The heat here is sometimes so great that 't is something wonderful. And rain falls only for three months in the year, viz., in June, July, and August. Indeed, but for the rain that falls in these three months, refreshing the earth and cooling the air, the drought would be so great that no one could exist.

They have many experts in an art which they call Physiognomy, by which they discern a man's character and qualities at once. They also know the import of meeting with any particulular bird or beast; for such omens are regarded by them more than by any people in the world. Thus if a man is going along the road and hears some one sneeze, if he deems it a good token for himself he goes on, but if otherwise he stops a bit, or peradventure turns back altogether from his journey.

As soon as a child is born, they write down his nativity, that is to say

the day and hour, the month, and the moon's age. This custom they observe because every single thing they do is done with reference to astrology, and by advice of diviners skilled in Sorcery and Magic and Geomancy, and such like diabolical arts; and some of them are also acquainted with Astrology.

All parents who have male children, as soon as these have attained the age of 13, dismiss them from their home, and do not allow them further maintenance in the family. For they say that the boys are then of an age to get their living by trade; so off they pack them with some twenty or four-and-twenty groats, or at least with money equivalent to that. And these urchins are running about all day from pillar to post, buying and selling. At the time of the pearl-fishery they run to the beach and purchase, from the fishers or others, five or six pearls, according to their ability, and take these to the merchants, who are keeping indoors for fear of the sun, and say to them: "These cost me such a price; now give me what profit you please on them." So the merchant gives something over the cost price for their profit. They do in the same way with many other articles, so that they become trained to be very dexterous and keen traders. And every day they take their food to their mothers to be cooked and served, but do not eat a scrap at the expense of their fathers.

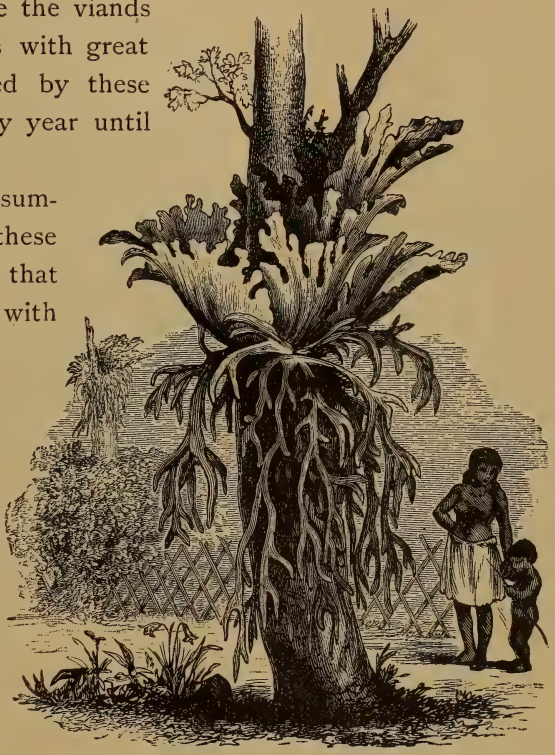
In this kingdom and all over India the birds and beasts are entirely different from ours, all but one bird which is exactly like ours, and that is the Quail. But every thing else is totally different. For example they have bats,—I mean those birds that fly by night and have no feathers of any kind; well their birds of this kind are as big as a goshawk! Their goshawks again are as black as crows, a good deal bigger than ours, and very swift and sure.

Another strange thing is that they feed their horses with boiled rice and boiled meat, and various other kinds of cooked food. That is the reason why all the horses die off.

They have certain abbeys in which are gods and goddesses to whom many young girls are consecrated; their fathers and mothers presenting them to that idol for which they entertain the greatest devotion. And when the monks of a convent desire to make a feast to their god, they

send for all those consecrated damsels and make them sing and dance before the idol with great festivity. They also bring meats to feed their idol withal; that is to say, the damsels prepare dishes of meat and other good things and put the food before the idol, and leave it there a good while, and then the damsels all go to their dancing and singing and festivity for about as long as a great Baron might require to eat his dinner. By that time they say the spirit of the idols has consumed the substance of the food, so they remove the viands to be eaten by themselves with great jollity. This is performed by these damsels several times every year until they are married.

The reason assigned for summoning the damsels to these feasts is, as the monks say, that the god is vexed and angry with the goddess, and will hold no communication with her; and they say that if peace be not established between them things will go from bad to worse, and they never will bestow their grace and benediction. So they make those girls come in the way described, to dance and sing before the god and the goddess, in order that they may be reconciled to each other.



Gigantic Fern.

The men of this country have their beds made of very light canework, so arranged that, when they have got in and are going to sleep, they are drawn up by cords nearly to the ceiling and fixed there for the night. This is done to get out of the way of tarantulas which give terrible bites, as well as of fleas and such vermin, and at the same time to get as much air as possible in the great heat which prevails in that region. Not that

everybody does this, but only the nobles and great folks, for the others sleep on the streets.

DISCOURSING OF THE PLACE WHERE LIETH THE BODY OF ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE; AND OF THE MIRACLES THEREOF.

The body of Messer St. Thomas the Apostle lies in this province of Maabar at a certain little town having no great population; 't is a place

Head of a Dancing Girl.

where few traders go, because there is very little merchandize to be got there, and it is a place not very accessible. Both Christians and Saracens, however, greatly frequent it in pilgrimage. For the Saracens also do hold the Saint in great reverence, and say that he was one of their own Saracens and a great prophet, giving him the title of *Avarian*, which is as

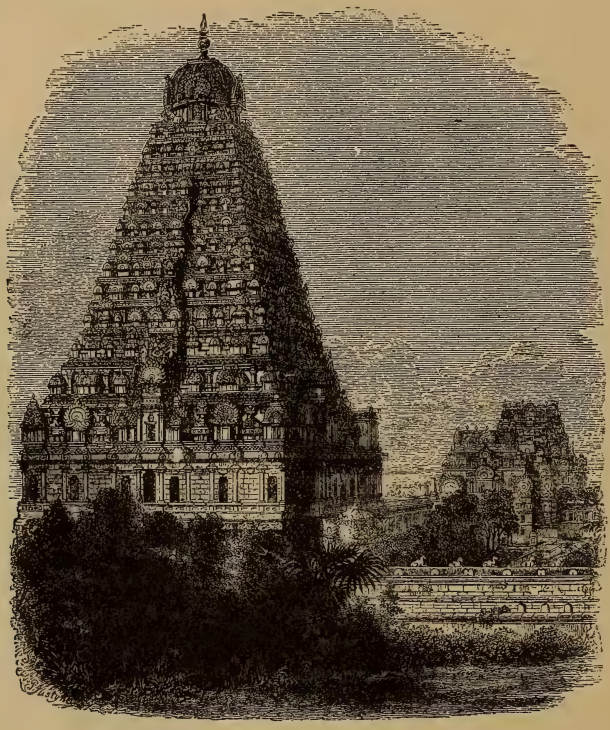
much as to say "Holy Man." The Christians who go thither in pilgrimage take of the earth from the place where the Saint was killed, and give a portion thereof to any one who is sick of a quartan or a tertian fever; and by the power of God and of St. Thomas the sick man is incontinently cured. The earth, I should tell you, is red. A very fine miracle occurred there in the year 1288, as I will now relate.

A certain Baron of that country, having great store of a certain kind of corn that is called *rice*, had filled up with it all the houses that belonged

Lycosa Tarantula.

to the church, and stood round about it. The Christian people in charge of the church were much distressed by his having thus stuffed their houses with his rice; the pilgrims too had nowhere to lay their heads; and they often begged the pagan Baron to remove his grain, but he would do nothing of the kind. So one night the Saint himself appeared with a fork in his hand, which he set at the Baron's throat, saying: "If thou void not my houses, that my pilgrims may have room, thou shalt die an evil death," and therewithal the Saint pressed him so hard with

the fork that he thought himself a dead man. And when morning came he caused all the houses to be voided of his rice, and told everybody what had befallen him at the Saint's hands. So the Christians were greatly rejoiced at this grand miracle, and rendered thanks to God and to the blessed St. Thomas. Other great miracles do often come to pass there, such as the healing of those who are sick or deformed, or the like, especially such as be Christians.



Pagoda at Tanjore.

The Christians who have charge of the church have a great number of the Indian Nut-trees, whereby they get their living; and they pay to one of those brother Kings six groats for each tree every year.

Now, I will tell you the manner in which the Christian brethren who keep the church relate the story of the Saint's death.

They tell that the Saint was in the wood outside his hermitage saying his prayers; and round about him were many peacocks, for these are

more plentiful in that country than anywhere else. And one of the idolaters of that country being of the lineage of those called *Govi* that I told you of, having gone with his bow and arrows to shoot peafowl, not seeing the Saint, let fly an arrow at one of the peacocks; and this arrow struck the holy man in the right side, insomuch that he died of the wound, sweetly addressing himself to his Creator. Before he came to that place where he thus died he had been in Nubia, where he converted much people to the faith of Jesus Christ.

The children that are born here are black enough, but the blacker they be the more they are thought of; wherefore from the day of their birth their parents do rub them every week with oil of sesamé, so that they become as black as devils. Moreover, they make their gods black and their devils white, and the images of their saints they do paint black all over.

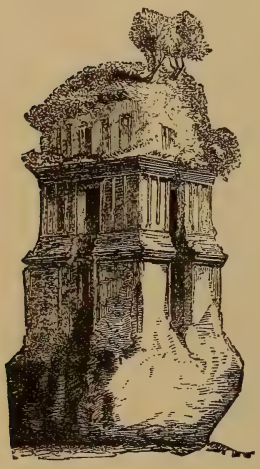
They have such faith in the ox, and hold it for a thing so holy, that when they go to the wars they take of the hair of the wild-ox, whereof I have elsewhere spoken, and wear it tied to the necks of their horses; or, if serving on foot, they hang this hair to their shields, or attach it to their own hair. And so this hair bears a high price, since without it nobody goes to the wars in any good heart. For they believe that any one who has it shall come scatheless out of battle.

"The portion of India washed by the Arabian Sea," said Fred, "is called the Malabar coast, and that which touches on the Bay of Bengal is called the Coromandel coast. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Coromandel or eastern coast was known as Maabar, the name which Polo gives it; the word in Arabic signifies a Passage or Ferry, and may have referred to the gulf which separates Ceylon from the mainland, together with the part of India that bordered it. The western coast was then as now called Malabar; Cape Comorin, the southern extremity of India, was the point where Malabar terminated and Maabar began.

"Marco was a little out of the way," continued Fred, "in the time of the year assigned to the pearl fishery. It takes place in

March and April, in the period between the cessation of the northeast, and the beginning of the southwest, monsoon. The fishing is carried on in water varying from three to ten fathoms in depth, and never more than in thirteen fathoms. Accidents from sharks are of rare occurrence, but the divers always carry knives for defending themselves from the attacks of these unpleasant visitors.

"The people of the country he is describing wear very little clothing, and consequently tailors are not in great demand. The description of the necklace worn by the king is not exaggerated, as we read in history that a string of pearls worth a hundred thousand pounds, or half a million dollars, was taken from the neck of a Hindoo king at the time of his capture by a Mohammedan invader in the eleventh century. Down to the present time there the princes of India retain their fondness for pearls, diamonds, and other jewels; an immense quantity of these things was obtained by the British troops at the sacking of Delhi, Lucknow, and other cities during the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, and a vast amount still remains in India.



Ruined Pagoda at Negapatam.

"The custom of widows throwing themselves on the funeral piles of their husbands and being burned to death prevailed down to within the present century, and its suppression is due to the efforts of the British Government in India. The Government makes no interference with the religious customs of the people except when they are coupled with cruelty; the *suttee*, or widow-burning, was considered a proper subject for consideration, and they have enforced their regulations with severity. It is a capital crime for any person to be present at such a performance, even as a quiet spectator, and it was only by treating the priests and all concerned with the extreme penalties of the law that the authorities were able to put a stop to the horrible practice.

"The ox is still worshipped as a sacred animal, but this does not save him from being compelled to work under the yoke as in other countries. In some of the cities, however, the brute can do pretty much as he pleases, and he makes a great deal of trouble for the merchants in grain and vegetables. At Benares you will find the streets full of sacred bulls that wander at their will and help themselves to whatever they wish to eat. They carefully avoid the part of the city occupied by the English, as some of their number that ventured too near the English butcher shops have mysteriously disappeared. The animals were fat and sleek, and it is supposed they may have been converted into beef, but of course the English deny that anything of the kind ever happened.

The Little Mount of St. Thomas.

"The custom of collecting debts by the creditor drawing a circle around the debtor was undoubtedly in vogue in former times, but is rarely heard of at present. It has been brought from India to Europe and America, and is practised occasionally by school-boys, and also by sailors on steamships crossing the Atlantic Ocean. Many a traveller who ventured out to the bows of a transatlantic steamer has found a circle drawn around him with a piece of chalk in the hands of a sailor, who only released him from the imaginary prison on payment of a shilling."

At the laugh which followed this statement Fred paused a moment. The delay gave one of the audience an opportunity to ask if it was really true that the natives of India fed their horses with meat.

"It is not entirely true," replied Fred, "but the statement is

by no means without a good basis. In some parts of India horses are fed with peas and rice cooked in oil and sugar; in others they receive boiled butter along with their other food, and in the Deccan the head of a sheep is occasionally given to a horse to strengthen him! In the stables of Akbar the Great, the daily allowance of a horse in winter was two pounds of flour, one and a half pounds of sugar, and half a pound of ghee or melted butter.

"On this subject Colonel Yule tells a good anecdote. At a dinner-table in England one day when Sir John Malcolm was present, one of his brother officers told the story of the sheep's head forming part of a horse's food. The audience was skeptical; the officer appealed to Sir John to confirm the statement, but the latter shook his head. After the dinner was over the story-teller remonstrated, but Sir John replied: 'My dear fellow, they took you for a Munchausen, and they would merely have taken me for another.'

St. Thomas Localities at Madras.

"The little town where the body of St. Thomas was buried was Mailapur, near the present city of Madras. There are two hills there which are called respectively the Great Mount and the Little Mount of St. Thomas. There is a fine road from the city to these hills, and it forms a favorite drive for the English residents of Madras.

"I will now," continued Fred, "make way for Frank again, who will tell you about another part of India and have something to say of the diamond mines." Frank immediately rose and read:—

CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF MUTFILI.

When you leave Maabar and go about 1,000 miles in a northerly direction you come to the kingdom of MUTFILI. This was formerly under the rule of a King, and since his death, some forty years past, it

has been under his Queen, a lady of much discretion, who for the great love she bore him never would marry another husband. And I can assure you that during all that space of forty years she had administered her realm as well as ever her husband did, or better; and as she was a lover of justice, of equity, and of peace, she was more beloved by those of her kingdom than ever was Lady or Lord of theirs before. The people are Idolaters, and are tributary to nobody. They live on flesh, and rice, and milk.

It is in this kingdom that diamonds are got; and I will tell you how. There are certain lofty mountains in those parts; and when the winter rains fall, which are very heavy, the waters come roaring down the mountains in great torrents. When the rains are over, and the waters from the mountains have ceased to flow, they search the beds of the torrents and find plenty of diamonds. In summer also there are plenty to be found in the mountains, but the heat of the sun is so great that it is scarcely possible to go thither, nor is there then a drop of water to be found. Moreover, in those mountains great serpents are rife to a marvellous degree, besides other vermin, and this owing to the great heat. The serpents are also the most venomous in existence, insomuch that any one going to that region runs fearful peril; for many have been destroyed by these evil reptiles.

Now among these mountains there are certain great and deep valleys, to the bottom of which there is no access. Wherefore the men who go in search of the diamonds take with them pieces of flesh, as lean as they can get, and these they cast into the bottom of a valley. Now there are numbers of white eagles that haunt those mountains and feed upon the serpents. When the eagles see the meat thrown down, they pounce upon it, and carry it up to some rocky hill-top where they begin to rend it. But there are men on the watch, and as soon as they see that the eagles have settled, they raise a loud shouting to drive them away. And when the eagles are thus frightened away the men recover the pieces of meat, and find them full of diamonds which have stuck to the meat down in the bottom. For the abundance of diamonds down there in the depths of the valleys is astonishing, but nobody can get down; and if one could, it would be only to be incontinently devoured by the serpents which are so rife there.

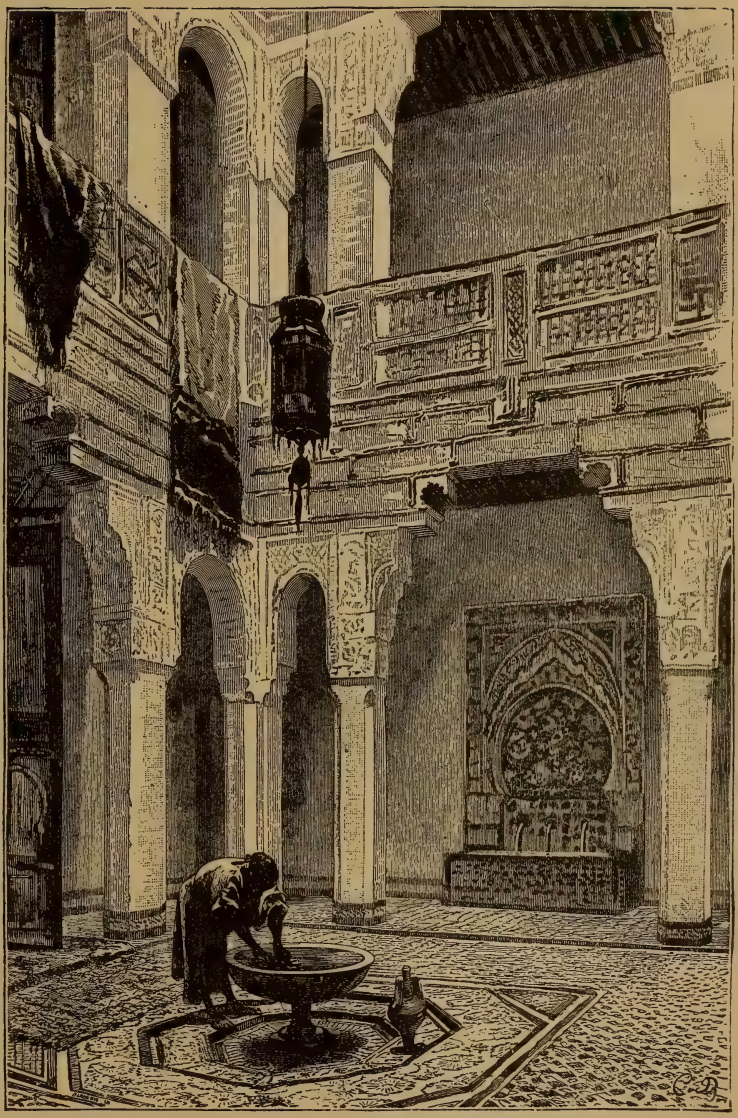
There is also another way of getting the diamonds. The people go to the nests of those white eagles, of which there are many, and find plenty of diamonds which the birds have swallowed in devouring the meat that was cast into the valleys. And, when the eagles themselves are taken, diamonds are found in their stomachs.

So now I have told you three different ways in which these stones are found. No other country but this kingdom of Mutfili produces them, but there they are found both abundantly and of large size. Those that are brought to our part of the world are only the refuse, as it were, of the finer and larger stones. For the flower of the diamonds and other large gems, as well as the largest pearls, are all carried to the Great Kaan and other Kings and Princes of those regions; in truth they possess all the great treasures of the world.

In this kingdom also are made the best and most delicate buckrams, and those of highest prices, in sooth they look like tissue of spider's web! There is no King nor Queen in the world but might be glad to wear them. The people have also the largest sheep in the world, and great abundance of all the necessaries of life.

"Mutfili," said Fred, "is doubtless Motupalle, about two hundred miles north of Madras; it is on the sea-coast, and is still a small town, as in Polo's day. The last prince of that region before Polo's visit to India had died without leaving a son to succeed him; his widow managed the government until the son of her daughter was old enough to ascend the throne, a period which is variously given by the historians, though by none less than twenty-eight years.

"To those of you who have read the 'Arabian Nights,'" continued Fred, "the manner of taking diamonds from the Valley of Serpents is not new. It appears in the story of Sindbad the Sailor, and the narrative is so like that of Polo, we must conclude that the two had a common origin. The authorship of the 'Arabian Nights' Entertainments' is involved in mystery; the stories are supposed to have been written in the eighth century, but some Oriental scholars think they belong to a much



Court of a Diamond Merchant's House

more recent date. It is not likely that Polo ever heard of the 'Arabian Nights,' and the probabilities are that the story of the diamonds originated in India in the region of the very mines he describes. There are other fables of the same sort, but none of them resemble Polo so closely as the wonderful adventure of Sindbad.

"Marco is quite right in saying that the best of the stones were kept in India, while Europe received only the refuse. It is only in modern times that the finest stones of Golconda and other mines have been brought to Europe, and the most of these have been the plunder of warfare rather than the purchases of peaceful merchants.

Travelling Coach of Southern India.

"One of the most famous diamonds in the world, the *Koh-i-Noor*, or 'Mountain of Light,' came from the Golconda mines in the kingdom which Polo is describing. Its possessors were for centuries the rulers of Hindostan, and the *Koh-i-Noor* descended from father to son. Through a long line of these kings it went at length to the ruler of Afghanistan, and from him was transferred to Runjeet Singh, the ruler of the Punjaub in Northern India. In 1849 the Punjaub was conquered by the English, and the *Koh-i-Noor* was sent as a present to Queen Victoria, who has retained it ever since."

One of the youths in the audience asked if the mines of Golconda were as celebrated as ever for their diamonds, and if large amounts of the precious stones were obtained there.

"I have spoken of the mines of Golconda," replied Fred,

"but my language was not strictly correct, though I have followed the custom of centuries. The diamonds were only cut and polished at Golconda; the mines are not in the neighborhood of the city, but are scattered through Southern India in a good many localities. They formerly gave a large revenue to the kings that controlled them, but their product is greatly diminished, and comparatively few of the diamonds of India come into the market. The mines of Brazil and South Africa now give the principal supply, and so great is the amount obtained from Brazil, that it was thought at one time the diamond business would be ruined. South Africa has produced a great quantity, but all the diamonds found there have a yellowish tint, which greatly reduces their value. Stones from India are known as 'old mine' diamonds, to distinguish them from the modern discoveries.

"But it is getting late," said Fred, as he paused at the end of his dissertation on diamonds, "and the moon is low. It is time for us to go home, and I 'm sure our president is ready to entertain a motion for adjournment."

And so the meeting came to an end.

CHAPTER XXII.

Caste in India—The Brahmans—Effect of Railway Travel on Caste Distinctions—Cities and Provinces in Polo's day—Lar, Eli, and Malabar—East Indian Pirates—Guzerat and its Cities—Ambergris: Its Character and Origin.

"I am about to read," said Frank at the opening of the next session of the Society, "Polo's account of the Brahmans. The word *Abraiaman*, which he uses, is probably an incorrect Arabic plural of *Brahman*, the name of the highest caste of the natives of India. *Caste* originally meant *color*, and the system of caste was established in order to uphold the political supremacy of the conquerors, who were of lighter complexion than the native inhabitants. Marriage with the dark races was forbidden, and to have the decree as binding as possible it was made a religious observance. The four great castes of India are the *Brahmans*, priestly order; *Kshatryas*, warriors; *Vaishyas*, traders, citizens, and agriculturists; and *Sudras*, the menial classes. Marco is wrong when he describes the Brahmans as merchants; they may occasionally occupy themselves with trade, but in most parts of India they would lose caste by doing so. The majority of Brahmans would consider themselves dishonored by trading or earning their living in any other respectable way, but they would have no scruple at begging."

With this explanation Frank turned to the book and read as follows:

CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF LAR WHENCE THE BRAHMANS COME.

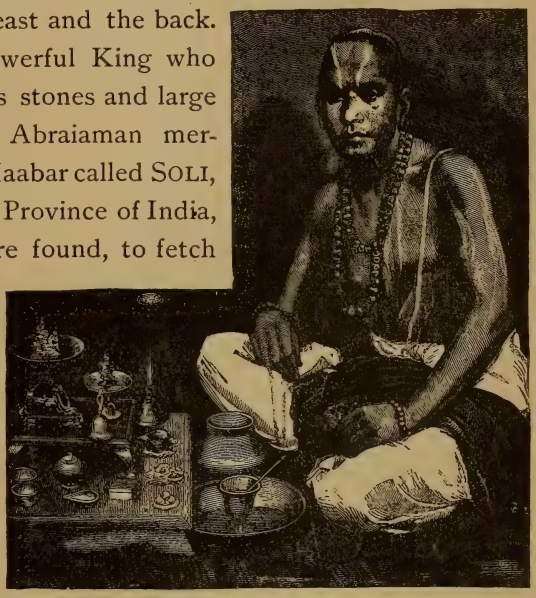
LAR is a Province lying towards the west when you quit the place where the Body of St. Thomas lies; and all the *Abraiaman* in the world come from that province.

You must know that these Abraiaman are the best merchants in the

world, and the most truthful, for they would not tell a lie for any thing on earth. If a foreign merchant who does not know the ways of the country applies to them and entrusts his goods to them, they will take charge of these, and sell them in the most loyal manner, seeking zealously the profit of the foreigner and asking no commission except what he pleases to bestow. They eat no flesh, and drink no wine, and live a life of great purity; nor would they on any account take what belongs to another; so their law commands. And they are all distinguished by wearing a thread of cotton over one shoulder and tied under the other arm, so that it crosses the breast and the back.

They have a rich and powerful King who is eager to purchase precious stones and large pearls; and he sends these Abraiaman merchants into the kingdom of Maabar called SOLI, which is the best and noblest Province of India, and where the best pearls are found, to fetch him as many of these as they can get, and he pays them double the cost price for all.

So in this way he has a vast treasure of such valuables.



A Brahman Saying His Prayers.

These Abraiaman are Idolaters; and they pay greater heed to signs and omens than any people that exists. I will mention as an example one of their customs. To every day of the week they assign an augury of this sort. Suppose that there is some purchase in hand, he who proposes to buy, when he gets up in the morning takes note of his own shadow in the sun, which he says ought to be on that day of such and such a length; and if his shadow be of the proper length for the day he completes his purchase; if not, he will on no account do so, but waits till his shadow corresponds with that prescribed. For there is a length established for the shadow for every individual day of the week; and the merchant will complete no business unless he finds his shadow of the

length set down for that particular day. Also to each day in the week they assign one unlucky hour, which they term *Choiach*. For example, on Monday the hour of Half-tierce, on Tuesday that of Tierce, on Wednesday Nones, and so on.

Again, if one of them is in the house, and is meditating a purchase, should he see a tarantula (such as are very common in that country) on the wall, provided it advances from a quarter that he deems lucky, he will complete his purchase at once; but if it comes from a quarter that he considers unlucky, he will not do so on any inducement. Moreover, if in going out he hears any one sneeze, if it seems to him a good omen he will go on, but if the reverse he will sit down on the spot where he is, as long as he thinks that he ought to tarry before going on again. Or, if in travelling along the road he sees a swallow fly by, should its direction be lucky he will proceed, but if not he will turn back again; in fact, they are worse (in these whims) than so many Patrians!

Young Lady of Southern India.

These Abraiaman are very long-lived, owing to their extreme abstinence in eating. And they never allow themselves to be let blood in any part of the body. They have capital teeth, which is owing to a certain herb they chew, which greatly improves their appearance, and is also very good for the health.

There is another class of people called *Chughi*, who are indeed properly Abraiaman, but they form a religious order devoted to the Idols. They are extremely long-lived, every man of them living to 150 or 200 years. They eat very little, but what they do eat is good; rice and milk chiefly. And these people make use of a very strange beverage; for they make a potion of sulphur and quicksilver mixt together, and this they drink twice every month. This, they say, gives them long life; and it is a potion they are used to take from their childhood.

An Indian Fakir.

There are certain members of this Order who lead the most ascetic life in the world, going quite naked; and these worship the Ox. Most of them have a small ox of brass or pewter or gold, which they wear tied over the forehead.

They eat not from bowls or trenchers, but put their victuals on leaves of the Apple of Paradise and other big leaves; these, however, they use dry, never green. For they say the green leaves have a soul in them, and so it would be a sin. And they would rather die than do what they deem their Law pronounces to be sin. If any one asks how it comes that they are not ashamed to go naked as they do, they say: "We go naked because naked we came into the world, and we desire to have nothing about us that is of this world."

They would not kill an animal on any account, not even a fly, or a flea, or any thing in fact that has life; for they say these all have souls, and it would be sin to do so. They eat no vegetable in a green state, only

such as are dry. And they sleep on the ground, without a scrap of clothing on them or under them, so that it is a marvel they don't all die, in place of living so long as I have told you. They fast every day in the year, and drink nought but water. And when a novice has to be received among them they keep him awhile in their convent, and make him follow their rule of life.

They are such cruel and perfidious Idolaters that it is very devilry. They say that they burn the bodies of the dead, because if they were not burnt worms would be bred which would eat the body; and when no more food remained for them these worms would die, and the soul belonging to that body would bear the sin and the punishment of their death. And that is why they burn their dead!

Now I have told you about a great part of the people of the great Province of Maabar and their customs; but I have still other things to tell of this same province of Maabar, so I will speak of a city thereof which is called CAIL.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF CAIL.

Cail is a great and noble city, and belongs to ASHAR, the eldest of the five brother Kings. It is at this city that all the ships touch that come from the west, as from Hormos and from Kis and from Aden, and all Arabia, laden with horses and with other things for sale. And this brings a great concourse of people from the country round about, and so there is great business done in this city of Cail.

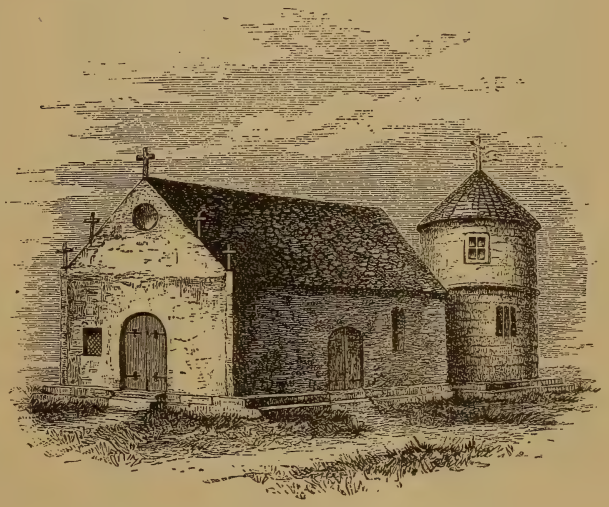
The King possesses vast treasures, and wears upon his person great store of rich jewels. He maintains great state, and administers his kingdom with great equity, and extends great favor to merchants and foreigners, so that they are very glad to visit his city.

This King has some 300 wives; for in those parts the man who has most wives is most thought of.

As I told you before, there are in this great province of Maaber five crowned Kings, who are all own brothers born of one father and of one mother, and this king is one of them. Their mother is still living. And when they disagree and go forth to war against one another, their mother throws herself between them to prevent their fighting. In this way hath

she full many a time brought them to desist. But when she dies it will most assuredly happen that they will fall out and destroy one another.

All the people of this city, as well as of the rest of India, have a custom of perpetually keeping in the mouth a certain leaf called *Tembul*, to gratify a certain habit and desire they have, continually chewing it and spitting out the saliva that it excites. The lords and gentlefolks and the King have these leaves prepared with camphor and other aromatic spices, and also mixt with quicklime. And this practice was said to be very good for the health. If any one desires to offer a gross insult to another, when he meets him he spits this leaf or its juice in his face. The other immediately runs before the King, relates the insult that has been offered him, and demands leave to fight the offender. The King supplies the arms, which are sword and target, and all the people flock to see, and there the two fight till one of them is killed. They must not use the point of the sword, for this the King forbids.



Ancient Christian Church on the Malabar Coast.

OF THE KINGDOM OF COILUM.

When you quit the Maabar and go 500 miles towards the south-west you come to the kingdom of COILUM. The people are Idolaters, but there are also some Christians and some Jews. The natives have a language of their own, and a King of their own, and are tributary to no one.

A great deal of brazil is got here which is called *brazil Coilumin* from the country which produces it; 't is of very fine quality. Good ginger also grows here, and it is known by the same name of Coilumin after the country. Pepper too grows in great abundance throughout this country,

and I will tell you how. The pepper-trees are not wild but cultivated, being regularly planted and watered; and the pepper is gathered in the months of May, June, and July. They have also abundance of very fine indigo. This is made of a certain herb which is gathered, and, after the roots have been removed, is put into great vessels, upon which they pour water, and then leave it till the whole of the plant is decomposed. They then put this liquid in the sun, which is tremendously hot there, so that it boils and coagulates, and becomes such as we see it. They then divide it into pieces of four ounces each, and in that form it is exported to our parts. And I assure you that the heat of the sun is so great there that it is scarcely to be endured; in fact if you put an egg into one of the rivers it will be boiled, before you have had time to go any distance, by the mere heat of the sun.

The merchants from Manzi and from Arabia and from the Levant come thither with their ships and their merchandize and make great profits both by what they import and by what they export.

There are in this country many and divers beasts quite different from those of other parts of the world. Thus there are lions black all over, with no mixture of any other color; and there are parrots of many sorts, for some are white as snow, with red beak and feet, and some are red, and some are blue, forming the most charming sight in the world; there are green ones too. There are also some parrots of exceeding small size, beautiful creatures. They have also very beautiful peacocks, larger than ours and different; and they have cocks and hens quite different from ours; in short, every thing they have is different from ours, and finer and better. Neither is their fruit like ours, nor their beasts, nor their birds; and this difference all comes of the excessive heat.

Corn they have none but rice. So also their wine they make from palm-sugar; capital drink it is, and very speedily it makes a man drunk. All other necessaries of man's life they have in great plenty and cheapness. They have very good astrologers and physicians. Man and woman, they are all black and go naked, all save a fine cloth worn about the middle. They marry their cousins german, and a man takes his brother's wife after the brother's death; and all the people of India have this custom.

OF THE COUNTRY CALLED COMARI.

COMARI is a country belonging to India, and there you can see something of the North Star, which we had not been able to see from the Lesser Java thus far. In order to see it you must go some 30 miles out to sea, and then you see it about a cubit above the water.

This is a very wild country, and there are beasts of all kinds there, especially monkeys of such peculiar fashion that you would take them for men! There are also *gatpauls* in wonderful diversity, with bears, lions, and leopards in abundance.

Voishya and Sudra.

"A great deal could be said on the subject of caste," remarked Fred, as he rose to speak, "but our time will not permit an extended lecture. Dr. Allen has promised to tell us something about it, and I gladly make way for him."

"Frank has told you," said the doctor, "about the origin of caste, which is supposed to date from about three thousand years ago. The four principal castes have now a great many sub-divisions, and in many parts of India all but the Brahman caste have altogether disappeared. Men of all castes have risen into prominence, and the sub-divisions in most instances take the form of guilds or trades-unions. The effect of this distinction is par-

ticularly noticeable among the household and other servants of Europeans living in India. The man who sweeps your room will not bring you a glass of water, and the one who waits on you at table will not carry a letter to a neighbor's house, because that is the business of another caste. The groom who takes care of your horse would leave his situation rather than cut a little grass for the animal, since the grooms and grass-cutters form separate castes. A nurse-maid in charge of a child will not pick up her mistress' scissors when they have fallen on the floor; if asked to do so she will go and tell the housekeeper, and the latter sends the particular servant whose caste rules permit her to do what is wanted. In former times, if a man of the lowest caste touched, however accidentally, a man of a high caste, or even allowed his shadow to fall on him, the latter had the right to kill the offender on the spot. In some parts of India, to-day, a Brahman will throw away his dinner and go hungry if the shadow of a *sudra* falls upon it while it is being cooked. All men of high caste who violate the rules of their order, even in the most trivial manner, are degraded, and can only be restored on payment of a heavy fine. For some offences there is no restoration, and the man is thereafter shunned by his relatives and former friends

Young Woman of Madras.

"Since the conquest of India by the English caste distinctions have been steadily breaking down, and especially since the introduction of railways. In the fourth-class carriages the natives are obliged to travel together, as the companies refuse to make any divisions on account of caste. It is impossible for them to avoid contact with each other, and the high-caste men soon learn that they suffer no injury by brushing against *sudras* and other low fellows. If they tried to exercise their old rights

View of Cape Comorin, the Southerly Point of India.

of killing the latter for the offence they would be tried and punished for murder, and consequently they submit in patience. Englishmen living in India say the railways have done more toward the abolition of caste than all other influences together.

"You may think," continued the doctor, "that we have nothing of the kind in this country, but looking closely at our customs you will find that the distinction exists in various forms. When a servant in New York or Boston declines to do certain things

because they are 'not his place,' he is making the same excuse that a servant in Calcutta does when he says his caste forbids. When a gentleman of society, or a lawyer, doctor, or other professional man, refuses to associate with a tradesman or mechanic, he is echoing the belief of the Brahman in the rules and obligations of caste. Many other examples of caste distinctions in this country might be mentioned, but the ones I have given will be sufficient. In England and Europe they are far more numerous than here, and some Americans think we are adopting the customs of the Old World much too rapidly for our welfare."

The doctor resumed his seat and Fred rose to continue his comments.

"The position of Lar," said he, "where Polo locates the country of the Brahmans, is not clearly identified. Neither is 'the great and noble city of Cail,' though the latter is supposed to be a port in Tinnevelly, on the east coast of India. Coilum is the Quilon of to-day, and Comari is the country around Cape Comorin, the most southerly point of India. The *Gatpaul* of Comari has puzzled the naturalists, but is generally supposed to be a species of ape found in that region. For the rest the description of the country is very good, and shows that Marco's information was well founded. Indigo is made to-day in very much the same way as he tells us, and the *teembul* or betel leaf is chewed as a narcotic or excitant very much as tobacco is used in America. It is highly nauseating to Europeans, but millions of Asiatics are addicted to its use. Lime is generally rolled into the leaf and sometimes camphor and musk, according to the taste of the individual or the custom of the country."

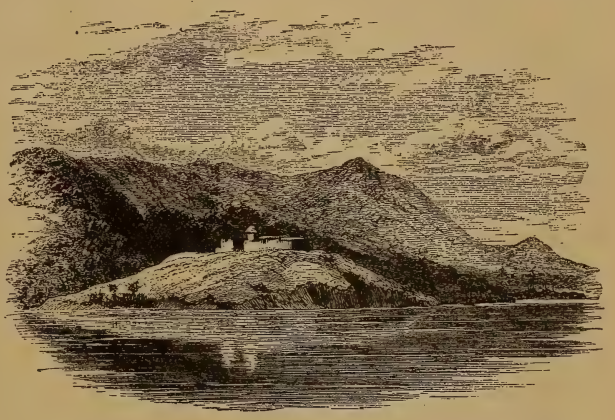
Fred paused and Frank continued with the story as told by Polo.

CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF ELI.

ELI is a kingdom towards the west, about 300 miles from Comari. The people are Idolaters and have a king, and are tributary to nobody; and have a peculiar language. We will tell you particulars about their manners and their products, and you will better understand things now because we are drawing near to places that are not so outlandish.

There is no proper harbor in the country, but there are many great rivers with good estuaries, wide and deep. Pepper and ginger grow there, and other spices in quantities. The King is rich in treasure, but not very strong in forces. The approach to his kingdom however is so strong by nature that no one can attack him, so he is afraid of nobody.

If any ship enters their estuary and anchors there, having been bound for some other port, they seize her and plunder the cargo. For they say: "You were bound for somewhere else, and 't is God has sent you hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods." And they think it no sin to act thus. And this naughty custom prevails all over these provinces of India, to wit, that if a ship be driven by stress of weather into some other port than that to which it was bound, it is sure to be plundered. But if a ship come bound originally to the place they receive it with all honor and give it due protection. The ships of Manzi and other countries that come hither in summer lay in their cargoes in 6 or 8 days and depart as fast as possible, because there is no harbor other than the river mouth, a mere roadstead and sandbanks, so that it is perilous to tarry there. The ships of Manzi indeed are not so much afraid of these roadsteads as others are, because they have such huge wooden anchors which hold in all weather.



Monte d'Ely, from the Sea.

There are many lions and other wild beasts here and plenty of game, both beast and bird.

CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF MELIBAR.

MELIBAR is a great kingdom lying towards the west. The people are Idolaters; they have a language of their own, and a king of their own, and pay tribute to nobody.

In this country you see more of the North Star, for it shows two cubits above the water. From this kingdom of Melibar, and from another near it called GOZURAT, there go forth every year more than a hundred corsair vessels on cruize. These pirates take with them their wives and children, and stay out the whole summer. Their method is to join in fleets of 20 or 30 of these pirate vessels together, and then they form what they call a sea cordon, that is, they drop off till there is an interval of 5 or 6 miles between ship and ship, so that they cover something like an hundred miles of sea, and no merchant ship can escape them. For when any one corsair sights a vessel a signal is made by fire or smoke, and then the whole of them make for this, and seize the merchants and plunder them. After they have plundered them they let them go, saying: "Go along with you and get more gain, and that mayhap will fall to us also!" But now the merchants are aware of this, and go so well manned and armed, and with such great ships, that they don't fear the corsairs. Still mishaps do befall them at times.

There is in this kingdom a great quantity of pepper, and ginger, and cinnamon, and turbit, and of nuts of India. They also manufacture very delicate and beautiful buckrams. The ships that come from the east bring copper in ballast. They also bring hither cloths of silk and gold, and sendels; also gold and silver, cloves and spikenard, and other fine spices for which there is a demand here, and exchange them for the products of these countries.

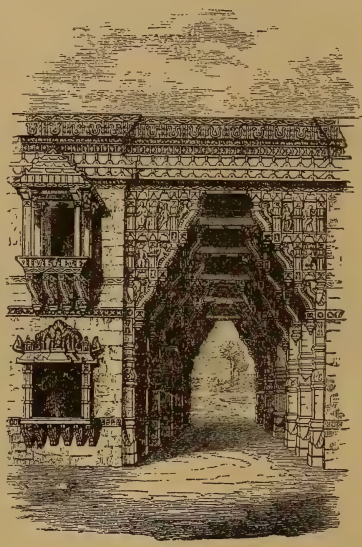
Ships come hither from many quarters, but especially from the great province of Manzi. Coarse spices are exported hence both to Manzi and to the west, and that which is carried by the merchants to Aden goes on to Alexandria, but the ships that go in the latter direction are not one to ten of those that go to the eastward; a very notable fact that I have mentioned before.

Now I have told you about Melibar; we shall now proceed and tell you of Gozurat. In speaking of these kingdoms we note only the capitals; there are great numbers of other cities and towns of which we shall say nothing, because it would make too long a story to speak of all.

CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF GOZURAT.

Gozurat is a great kingdom. The people are Idolaters and have a peculiar language, and a king of their own, and are tributary to no one. It lies towards the west, and the North Star is here still more conspicuous, showing itself at an altitude of about 6 cubits.

In this province of Gozurat there grows much pepper, and ginger, and indigo. They have also a great deal of cotton. Their cotton-trees are of very great size, growing full six paces high, and attaining to an age of 20 years. It is to be observed however that, when the trees are so old as that, the cotton is not good to spin, but only to quilt or stuff beds withal. Up to the age of 12 years indeed the trees give good spinning cotton, but from that age to 20 years the produce is inferior.



Archway in Guzerat.

They dress in this country great numbers of skins of various kinds, goat-skins, ox-skins, buffalo and wild ox-skins, as well as those of unicorns and other animals. In fact, so many are dressed every year as to load a number of ships for Arabia and other quarters. They also work here beautiful mats in red and blue leather, exquisitely inlaid with figures of birds and beasts and skilfully embroidered with gold and silver wire. These are marvellously beautiful things; they are used by the Saracens to sleep upon, and capital they are for that purpose. They also work cushions embroidered with gold, so fine that they are worth six marks of silver apiece, whilst some of those sleeping-mats are worth ten marks.

CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF TANA.

TANA is a great kingdom lying towards the west, a kingdom great both in size and worth. The people are Idolaters, with a language of their own, and a king of their own, and tributary to nobody. No pepper

grows there, nor other spices, but plenty of incense; not the white kind, however, but brown.

There is much traffic here, and many ships and merchants frequent the place; for there is a great export of leather of various excellent kinds, and also of good buckram and cotton. The merchants in their ships also import various articles, such as gold, silver, copper, and other things in demand.

With the King's connivance many corsairs launch from this port to plunder merchants. These corsairs have a covenant with the King that he shall get all the horses they capture, and all other plunder shall remain with them. The King does this because he has no horses of his own, whilst many are shipped from abroad towards India; for no ship ever goes thither without horses in addition to other cargo. The practice is naughty and unworthy of a king.

Indian Serpent-Charmers.

CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF CAMBAET.

CAMBAET is a great kingdom lying further west. The people are Idolaters, and have a language of their own, and a king of their own, and are tributary to nobody.

The North Star is here still more clearly visible; and henceforward the further you go west the higher you see it.

There is a great deal of trade in this country. It produces indigo in great abundance; and they also make much fine buckram. There is also a quantity of cotton which is exported hence to many quarters; and there is a great trade in hides, which are very well dressed; with many other kinds of merchandise too tedious to mention. Merchants come here with many ships and cargoes, but what they chiefly bring is gold, silver, copper, and tutia.

There are no pirates from this country; the inhabitants are good people, and live by their trade and manufactures.

CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF SEMENAT.

SEMENAT is a great kingdom towards the west. The people are Idolaters, and have a king and a language of their own, and pay tribute to nobody. They are not corsairs, but live by trade and industry as honest people ought. It is a place of very great trade. They are forsooth cruel Idolaters.

CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF KESMACORAN.

KESMACORAN is a kingdom having a king of its own and a peculiar language. Some of the people are Idolaters, but the most part are Saracens. They live by merchandize and industry, for they are professed traders and carry on much traffic by sea and land in all directions. Their food is rice and corn, flesh and milk, of which they have great store. There is no more to be said about them.

And you must know that this kingdom of Kesmacoran is the last in India as you go towards the west and northwest. You see, from Maabar on, this province is what is called the GREATER INDIA, and it is the best of all the Indies. I have now detailed to you all the kingdoms and provinces and chief cities of this India the Greater, that are upon the seaboard; but of those that lie in the interior I have said nothing, because that would make too long a story.

CONCERNING THE ISLAND OF SCOTRA.

When you leave this kingdom of Kesmacoran and go about 1,000 miles towards the south, then you come to an Island called SCOTRA. The people are all baptized Christians; and they have an Archbishop. They have a great deal of ambergris; and plenty also of cotton stuffs and other merchandize; especially great quantities of salt fish of a large and excellent kind. They also eat flesh and milk and rice, for that is their only kind of corn; and they all go naked like the other Indians.

The ambergris comes from the stomach of the whale, and as it is a great object of trade, the people contrive to take the whales with barbed iron darts, which, once they are fixed in the body, cannot come out again. A long cord is attached to this end, to that a small buoy which floats on the surface, so that when the whale dies they know where to find it.

They then draw the body ashore and extract the ambergris from the stomach and the oil from the head.

There is a great deal of trade there, for many ships come from all quarters with goods to sell to the natives. The merchants also purchase gold there, by which they make a great profit; and all the vessels bound for Aden touch at this Island.

Their Archbishop has nothing to do with the Pope of Rome, but is subject to the great Archbishop who lives at Baudas. He rules over the

Religious Procession in India.

Bishop of that Island, and over many other Bishops in those regions of the world, just as our Pope does in these.

A multitude of corsairs frequent the Island; they come there and encamp and put up their plunder to sale; and this they do to good profit, for the Christians of the Island purchase it, knowing well that it is Saracen or Pagan gear.

In this Island there are the best enchanters in the world. It is true that their Archbishop forbids the practice to the best of his ability; but 't is

all to no purpose, for they insist that their forefathers followed it, and so must they also. I will give you a sample of their enchantments. Thus, if a ship be sailing past with a fair wind and a strong, they will raise a contrary wind and compel her to turn back. In fact they make the wind blow as they list, and produce great tempests and disasters; and other such sorceries they perform, which it will be better to say nothing about in our Book.

"There is no district or province of Ely," said Fred, rising when Frank paused, "but the name is retained in Mount Dely, or *Monte d'Ely*, near Cananore on the west coast of the Madras Presidency of India. The peculiar practices of the inhabitants, in regarding ships that put into their ports from stress of weather as the gift of Providence and proper subjects of plunder, are not unknown in other parts of the world. People living on exposed parts of the coasts of England, France, and the United States, have been known to look upon wrecks as legitimate means of subsistence. It is currently reported that when business was dull in some of these localities the inhabitants have assembled in their churches and prayed that a wreck would be given them. In the Feejee and other islands of the Pacific Ocean where cannibalism formerly prevailed, the crews of wrecked ships or boats were invariably killed and eaten; they were regarded as food sent from Heaven, and the cannibals argued that it would be flying in the face of Providence to decline such precious gifts.

Bombay.

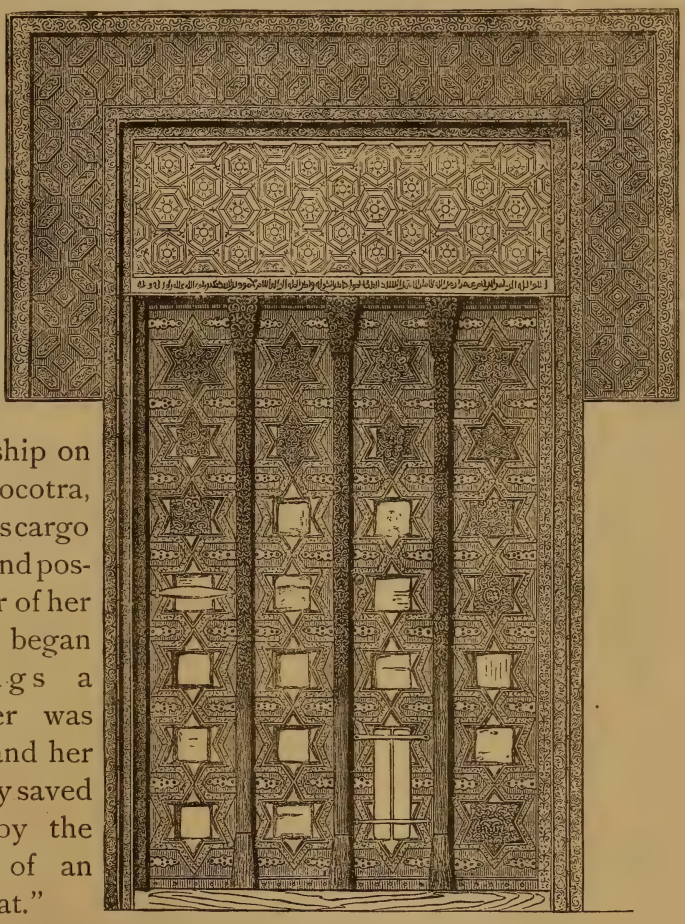
"By Melibar Marco evidently means Malabar, which is a name applied to part of the coast of India, as we have already seen. He makes a not unnatural mistake in calling it a province, and he gives us no boundaries so that we can identify the country

with any accuracy. The inhabitants of the Malabar coast have been noted for their piracy from very ancient times down to the present century; in Polo's day they carried on the business in the manner he describes, and even now an occasional piratical enterprise on their part is reported.

"Gozurat is the modern Guzerat, which lies on the west coast of India between latitude 20° and 25° north, and longitude 69° to 74° east. It contains forty-two thousand square miles and has about six millions of inhabitants. Marco speaks as if it lay next to Malabar, when in fact it is considerably farther to the north and quite distinct from the former region. He also leads us to infer that it was distinct from Tana, Cambay, and Somnath; all these places are included in Guzerat, which had its principal port at Cambay in Polo's time. The cotton-trees which he mentions are distinct from the well-known plant from which we take our fibre; the latter being an annual bush, while the trees are perennial. The trees abound in parts of India, Java, and other warm countries, but their fibre is of little consequence, and they are cultivated more for ornament than use. Sometimes the cotton from these trees is used for the manufacture of turbans and other things to be worn by the Brahmans only, and in some parts of India the tree has a sacred character, and people of the lower castes are forbidden to make any use of its fibre, or to burn its fallen branches.

"Tana is the modern town of Thana, about twenty miles from Bombay and of little present consequence. Bombay was founded more than two hundred years after Polo's death, and speedily absorbed the commerce of all its neighbors. Cambaet is the modern Cambay on the gulf of the same name, and Semenat is now known as Somnath. It is the site of the celebrated temple which was plundered by Sultan Mahmoud of Ghuzni in Afghanistan in A. D. 1024, who carried its gates away as a trophy of his conquest. Ghuzni was captured by the British in the Afghan campaign of 1842. Lord Ellenborough, then Governor-General of India, brought the gates back to India, and they are now in the British arsenal at Agra.

"Kesmacoran is the modern province of Mekran, generally called Kij-Mekran by the inhabitants. Scotra is the modern Socotra, an island of the Indian Ocean, off the east coast of Africa, 140 miles northeast of Cape Guardafui. In the middle ages the inhabitants were Christians, but they are now fanatical Mohammedans, living in a state of the lowest barbarism. Occasionally you read in the newspapers of the wreck of a ship on the coast of Socotra, the plunder of its cargo by the natives, and possibly the murder of her crew. Since we began these readings a French steamer was wrecked there, and her people were only saved from murder by the timely arrival of an English gun-boat."



The Gate of Somnath.

"Please tell us about the ambergris they find there," said one of the youths. "I would like to know what it is and what use is made of it."

Fred was evidently uninformed on the subject as he turned inquiringly towards the doctor. The latter responded to the mute appeal and thus answered the question :

"Ambergris means gray amber," said he, "and the substance bearing that name is of an ashen gray color. It is found floating on the sea in various parts of the world, in lumps varying from half an ounce to a hundred pounds in weight, and is taken from the intestines of the spermaceti whale; it is probably a secretion from the bile of the whale, but the scientists are not all agreed concerning it. It has an agreeable odor and is used in perfumery to a great extent; in Asia and Africa it is given as a medicine, but is hardly known for that purpose in Europe and America. As it costs about five dollars an ounce and sometimes more, it is not likely to come into general use. A lump of ambergris weighing 130 pounds was found in the West Indies a few years ago by a fisherman; he sold it for $2,500, and the purchaser realized double that amount on his speculation. The largest piece ever found was in the Dutch East Indies, and weighed 182 pounds."

The doctor's brief lecture on ambergris was duly applauded. Fred announced that the exercises of the next evening would begin with a description of the island of Madagascar, and then the meeting adjourned.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Madagascar and Zanzibar—The Gigantic Bird of Antiquity, the Roc—Discovery of a Roc's Skeleton in New Zealand—Description of Africa—Aden, Esher, and Dufur—How Frankincense is Obtained.

"OUR Venetian traveller was the first writer, European or Asiatic, to give a description of Madagascar," said Frank, at the opening of the next session of the Society, "and for this he deserves much honor. But he is wrong in much of his information, as the island contains no elephants, camels, leopards, bears, or lions. Evidently he had his notes concerning it mixed up with those referring to the coast of Africa, as you will see when you have heard what he says."

With this introduction Frank proceeded.

CONCERNING THE ISLAND OF MADEIGASCAR.

MADEIGASCAR is an Island toward the south, about a thousand miles from Scotra. The people are all Saracens, adoring Mahommet. They have four *Esheks*, *i. e.*, four Elders who are said to govern the whole Island. It is a most noble and beautiful Island, and one of the greatest in the world, for it is about 4000 miles in compass. The people live by trade and handicrafts.

In this Island, and in another beyond it called ZANGHIBAR, about which we shall tell you afterwards, there are more elephants than in any country in the world. The amount of traffic in elephants' teeth in these two Islands is something astonishing.

In this Island they eat no flesh but that of camels; and of these they kill an incredible number daily. They say it is the best and wholesomest of all flesh; and so they eat of it all the year round.

They have many trees of red sanders, of excellent quality; in fact, all their forests consist of it. They have also a quantity of ambergis, for

whales are abundant in that sea, and they catch numbers of them; and so are *Oil-heads*, which are a huge kind of fish, which also produce ambergris like the whale. There are numbers of leopards, bears, and lions in the country, and other wild beasts in abundance. Many traders and many ships go thither with cloths of gold and silk, and many other kinds of goods, and drive a profitable trade.

You must know that this Island lies so far south that ships cannot go further south or visit other Islands in that direction, except this one and that other of which we have to tell you, called Zanghibar. This is because the sea-current runs so strong towards the south that the ships which should attempt it never would get back again. Indeed, the ships of Maabar which visit this Island of Madeigascar, and that other of Zanghibar, arrive thither with marvellous speed, for great as the distance is they accomplish it in 20 days, whilst the return voyage takes them more than 3 months. This is because of the strong current running south, which continues with such singular force and in the same direction at all seasons.

Roc's Egg.

'T is said that in those other Islands to the south, which the ships are unable to visit because this strong current prevents their return, is found the bird *Gryphon*, which appears there at certain seasons. The description given of it is, however, entirely different from what our stories and pictures make it. For persons who had been there and had seen it told Messer Marco Polo that it was for all the world like an eagle, but one indeed of enormous size; so big in fact that its wings covered an extent of 30 paces, and its quills were 12 paces long, and thick in proportion. And it is so strong that it will seize an elephant in its talons and carry him high into the air, and drop him so that he is smashed to pieces; having so killed him the bird gryphon swoops down upon him and eats him at leisure. The people of those isles call the bird *Ruc*, and it has no other name. So I wot not if this be the real gryphon, or if there be another manner of bird as great. But this I can tell you for certain, that

they are not half lion and half bird as our stories do relate; but enormous as they be they are fashioned just like an eagle.

The Great Kaan sent to those parts to enquire about these curious matters, and the story was told by those who went thither. He also sent to procure the release of an envoy of his who had been despatched thither, and had been detained; so both those envoys had many wonderful things to tell the Great Kaan about those strange islands, and about the birds I have mentioned. They brought (as I heard) to the Great Kaan a feather of the said Ruc, which was stated to measure 90 spans, whilst the quill part was two palms in circumference, a marvellous object! The Great Kaan was delighted with it, and gave great presents to those who brought it. They also brought two boar's tusks, which weighed more than 14 lbs. a piece; and you may gather how big the boar must have been that had teeth like that! They related indeed that there were some of these boars as big as a great buffalo. There are also numbers of giraffes and wild asses; and in fact a marvellous number of wild beasts of strange aspect.

The Ruc. (From a Persian Drawing.)

CONCERNING THE ISLAND OF ZANGHIBAR. A WORD ON INDIA IN GENERAL.

ZANGHIBAR is a great and noble Island, with a compass of some 2000 miles. The people are all Idolaters, and have a king and a language of their own, and pay tribute to nobody. They are both tall and stout, but not tall in proportion to their stoutness, for if they were, being so stout and brawny, they would be absolutely like giants; and they are so strong that they will carry for four men and eat for five.

They are all black, and go naked, with only a little covering for decency. Their hair is as black as pepper, and so frizzly that even with water you can scarcely straighten it. And their mouths are so large, their noses so turned up, their lips so thick, their eyes so big and blood-shot, that they look like very devils; they are in fact so hideously ugly that the world has nothing to show more horrible.

Elephants are produced in this country in wonderful profusion. There are also lions that are black and quite different from ours. And their sheep are all exactly alike in color: the body all white and the head black; no other kind of sheep is found there, you may rest assured. They have also many giraffes. This is a beautiful creature, and I must give you a description of it. Its body is short and somewhat sloped to the rear, for its hind legs are short whilst the fore-legs and the neck are both very long, and thus its head stands about three paces from the ground. The head is small, and the animal is not at all mischievous. Its color is all red and white in round spots, and it is really a beautiful object.

The women of this Island are the ugliest in the world, with their great mouths and big eyes and thick noses. The people live on rice and flesh and milk and dates; and they make wine of dates and of rice and of good spices and sugar. There is a great deal of trade, and many merchants and vessels go thither. But the staple trade of the Island is in elephants' teeth, which are very abundant; and they have also much ambergris, as whales are plentiful.

They have among them excellent and valiant warriors, and have little fear of death. They have no horses, but fight mounted on camels and elephants. On the latter they set wooden castles which carry from ten to sixteen persons, armed with lances, swords, and stones, so that they fight to great purpose from these castles. They wear no armor, but carry only a shield of hide, besides their swords and lances, and so a marvellous number of them fall in battle. When they are going to take an elephant into battle they ply him well with their wine, so that he is made half drunk. They do this because the drink makes him more fierce and bold, and of more service in battle.

In speaking of the Indian Islands we have described only the most

noble provinces and kingdoms among them; for no man on earth could give you a true account of the whole of the Islands of India. Still, what I have described are the best, and as it were the Flower of the Indies. For the greater part of the other Indian Islands that I have omitted are subject to those that I have described.

It is a fact that in this Sea of India there are 12,700 Islands, inhabited and uninhabited, according to the charts and documents of experienced mariners who navigate that Indian Sea.

INDIA THE GREATER is that which extends from Maabar to Kesmacoran; and it contains 13 great kingdoms, of which we have described ten. These are all on the main land.

INDIA THE LESSER extends from the Province of Champa to Mutfili and contains eight great kingdoms. These are likewise all on the mainland. And neither of these numbers includes the Islands, among which also there are very numerous kingdoms, as I have told you.

Saracens Saying Their Prayers.

TREATING OF THE GREAT PROVINCE OF ABASH WHICH IS MIDDLE INDIA, AND IS ON THE MAINLAND.

ABASH is a very great Province, and you must know that it constitutes the MIDDLE INDIA; and it is on the mainland. There are in it six

great Kings with six great Kingdoms; and of these six Kings there are three that are Christians and three that are Saracens; but the greatest of all the six is a Christian, and all the others are subject to him.

The Christians in this country bear three marks on the face; one from the forehead to the middle of the nose, and one on either cheek. These marks are made with a hot iron, and form part of their baptism; for after that they have been baptized with water, these three marks are made, partly as a token of gentility, and partly as the completion of their baptism. There are also Jews in the country, and these bear two marks, one on either cheek; and the Saracens have but one, to wit, on the forehead extending halfway down the nose.

The Great King lives in the middle of the country; the Saracens towards Aden. St. Thomas the Apostle preached in this region, and after he had converted the people he went away to the province of Maabar, where he died; and there his body lies, as I have told you in a former place.

The people here are excellent soldiers, and they go on horseback, for they have horses in plenty. Well they may; for they are in daily war with the Soldan of ADEN, and with the Nubians, and a variety of other nations.

Their country abounds greatly in all kinds of victual; and the people live on flesh and rice and milk and sesame. They have plenty of elephants, not that they are bred in the country, but they are brought from the Islands of the other India. They have, however, many giraffes, which are produced in the country; besides bears, leopards, lions in abundance, and many other passing strange beasts. They have also numerous wild asses; and cocks and hens the most beautiful that exist, and many other kinds of birds. For instance they have ostriches that are nearly as big as asses; and plenty of beautiful parrots, with apes of sundry kinds, and baboons and other monkeys that have countenances all but human.

There are numerous cities and villages in this province of Abash, and many merchants; for there is much trade to be done there. The people also manufacture very fine buckrams and other cloths of cotton.

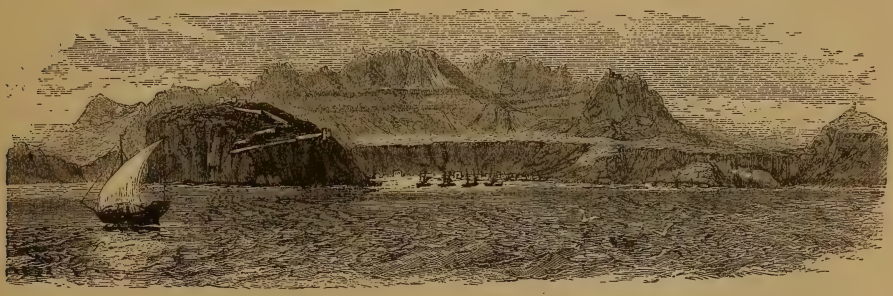
CONCERNING THE PROVINCE OF ADEN.

You must know that in the province of ADEN there is a Prince who is called the Soldan. The people are all Saracens and adorers of Ma-

hommet, and have a great hatred of Christians. There are many towns and villages in the country.

This Aden is the port to which many of the ships of India come with their cargoes; and from this haven the merchants carry the goods a distance of seven days further in small vessels. At the end of those seven days they land the goods and load them on camels, and so carry them a land journey of 30 days. This brings them to the river of ALEXANDRIA, and by it they descend to the latter city. It is by this way through Aden that the Saracens of Alexandria receive all their stores of pepper and other spicery; and there is no other route equally good and convenient by which these goods could reach that place.

And you must know that the Soldan of Aden receives a large amount in duties from the ships that traffic between India and his country,



View of Aden.

importing different kinds of goods; and from the exports also he gets a revenue, for there are despatched from the port of Aden to India a very large number of Arab chargers, and palfreys, and stout nags adapted for all work, which are a source of great profit to those who export them. For horses fetch very high prices in India, there being none bred there, as I have told you before; insomuch that a charger will sell there for 100 marks of silver and more. On these also the Soldan of Aden receives heavy payments in port charges, so that 't is said he is one of the richest princes in the world.

And it is a fact that when the Soldan of Babylon went against the city of Acre and took it, this Soldan of Aden sent to his assistance 30,000 horsemen and full 40,000 camels, to the great help of the Saracens and

the grievous injury of the Christians. He did this a great deal more for the hate he bears the Christians than for any love he bears the Soldan of Babylon; for these two do hate one another heartily.

I will tell you of a city which is subject to Aden, called ESHER.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF ESHER.

It is a great city lying in a north-westerly direction from the last, and 400 miles distant from the Port of Aden. It has a king, who is subject to the Soldan of Aden. He has a number of towns and villages under him, and administers his territory well and justly.

An Arab Shoe-Shop.

The people are Saracens. The place has a very good haven, wherefore many ships from India come thither with various cargoes; and they export many good chargers thence to India.

A great deal of white incense grows in this country, and brings in a great revenue to the Prince; for no one dares sell it to any one else; and whilst he takes it from the people at 10 livres of gold for the hundredweight, he sells it to the merchants at 60 livres, so his profit is immense.

Dates also grow very abundantly here. The people have no corn but rice, and very little of that; but plenty is brought from abroad, for it sells here at a good profit. They have fish in great profusion, and notably plenty of tunny of large size; so plentiful indeed that you may buy two big ones for a Venice groat of silver. The natives live on meat and rice and fish. They have no wine of the vine, but they make good wine from sugar, from rice, and from dates also.

And I must tell you another very strange thing. You must know that their sheep have no ears, but where the ear ought to be they have a little horn! They are pretty little beasts.

And I must not omit to tell you that all their cattle, including horses, oxen, and camels, live upon small fish and nought besides, for 't is all they get to eat. You see in all this country there is no grass or forage of any kind; it is the driest country on the face of the earth. The fish which are given to the cattle are very small, and during March, April, and May, are caught in such quantities as would astonish you. They are then dried and stored, and the beasts are fed on them from year's end to year's end. The cattle will also readily eat these fish all alive and just out of the water.

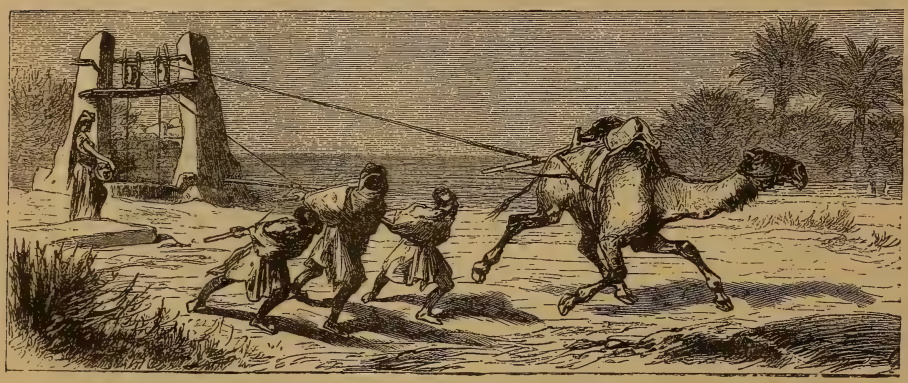
An Arab Chief.

The people here have likewise many other kinds of fish of large size and good quality, exceedingly cheap; these they cut in pieces of about a pound each, and dry them in the sun, and then store them, and eat them all the year through, like so much biscuit.

"Frank has disposed of the quadrupeds of Madagascar," said Fred, "but we have something left that is more difficult to manage than all the four-footed beasts. I refer to the gigantic bird described under the name of *rukh* or *roc*.

"Polo is careful to distinguish it from the *gryphon* or griffin, which was a fabulous creature of more ancient date than the roc. The story of the roc existed in many countries; the Hindoos had the *garuda*, the Persians the *simurgh*, and the Greeks the *gryps*. *Rukh* is the Arab name for the bird, and has been rendered into *roc* in Lane's translation of the Arabian Nights.

"The most graphic account of this wonderful bird is in the narrative of Sindbad the Sailor which has been mentioned already.



Drawing Water from an Arabian Well.

Many travellers have repeated the fable, and one Arab writer, Ibn Batuta, professes to have seen a roc about ten miles from a ship on which he was sailing. It seemed to him like a large island in the air, and we may suppose that he was deceived by a mirage, though the sailors declared it to be a gigantic bird.

"Let me give you a summary of the stories that were current in Europe from the 12th to the 17th century, condensing them from Col. Yule's notes on the subject."

A Portuguese navigator of the 15th century says: "The bigness of the bird is such that between the extremities of the wings is said to be

sixty paces. They say too that it carries away an elephant or any other great animal with the greatest ease, and does great injury to the inhabitants of the country, and is most rapid in its flight."

In the Indian Sea, says Kazwini, is a bird of size so vast that when it is dead they take the half of its bill and make a ship of it! And there too Pigafetta heard of this bird, under its Hindu name of *Garuda*, so big that it could fly away with an elephant. Kazwini also says that it carries off an elephant as a hawk flies off with a mouse; his flight is like the loud thunder. Whilom he dwelt near the haunts of men, and wrought them great mischief. But once on a time it had carried off a bride in her bridal array, and Hamdallah, the Prophet of those days, invoked a curse upon the bird. Wherefore the Lord banished it to an inaccessible Island in the Encircling Ocean.

In Northern Siberia the people have a firm belief in the former existence of birds of colossal size, suggested apparently by the fossil bones of great pachyderms which are so abundant there. The compressed sabre-like horns of *Rhinoceros tichorinus* are constantly called, even by Russian merchants, *birds' claws*. Some of the native tribes fancy the vaulted skull of the same rhinoceros to be the bird's head, and the leg-bones of other pachyderms to be its quills; and they relate that their forefathers used to fight wonderful battles with this bird.

Padre Bolivar, a Jesuit writer, says: "In some countries I have myself seen the wing-feathers of that enormous fowl, although the bird itself I never beheld. The feather in question, as could be deduced from its form, was one of the middle ones, and it was twenty-eight palms in length and three in breadth. The quill part, from the root to the extremity was five palms in length, of the thickness of an average man's arm, and of extreme strength and hardness. The fibres of the feather were equal in length and closely fitted, so that they could scarcely be parted without some exertion of force; and they were jet black, whilst the quill part was white. Those who had seen the bird stated that it was bigger than the bulk of a couple of elephants, and that hitherto nobody had succeeded in killing one. It rises to the clouds with such extraordinary swiftness that it seems scarcely to stir its wings. In form it is like an eagle. Its black feathers are held in very high estimation, and it is with the greatest difficulty that

one can be got from the natives, for one such serves to fan ten people, and to keep off the terrible heat from them, as well as the wasps and flies."

Abu Mahomed, of Spain, relates that a merchant arrived in Barbary who had lived long among the Chinese. He had with him the quill of a chick Rukh, and this held nine skins of water. He related the story of how he came by it, a story nearly the same as one of Sindbad's about the Rukh's egg.

A seaman wrecked on the coast of Africa says: "By a hut that stood in the middle of a field of rice and *durra* there was a trough. A man came up leading a pair of oxen, laden with twelve skins of water, and emptied them into the trough. I drew near to drink, and found the trough to be polished like a steel blade, quite different from either glass or pottery. 'It is the hollow of a quill,' said the man. I would not believe a word of the sort, until, after rubbing it inside and outside, I found it to be transparent, and to retain the traces of the barbs."

Friar Jordanus also says: "In Eastern Africa are certain birds which are called *Roc*, so big that they easily carry an elephant up into the air. I have seen a person who said that he had seen one of those birds, one wing only of which stretched to a length of eighty palms."

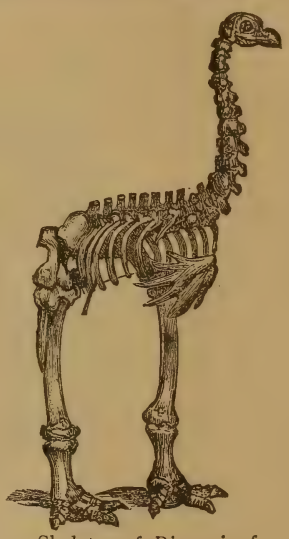
The Japanese Encyclopædia states that in the country of the *Tsengsz'* in the S. W. Ocean, there is a bird called *pheng*, which in its flight eclipses the sun. It can swallow a camel; and its quills are used for water casks.

"Of course these are all travellers' tales," said Fred, "and I have given them to you partly because they are amusing, and partly for the reason before stated. But the stories had a foundation, and within the last few years it has been pretty well settled that the roc was not a fabulous bird, except in the exaggeration of his size.

"There was in Madagascar a bird which is now extinct and has been named *Aepyornis* by the naturalists. A few of his bones have been found and also a fossil egg which is now in the British Museum. The egg is thirteen and a quarter inches long

by six and a half in diameter, and its capacity is about three and a half gallons. Down to a very recent date this bird was supposed to be still in existence, and the traditions of the island abound in narratives of his performances. Comparing the egg with that of the eagle, and considering the bird of proportionate size, the great quills of the *Aepyornis* would be about ten feet long, and the spread of his wings over thirty feet. This is on the supposition that he was a bird of prey, but the prevailing opinion of naturalists places him among the ostrich family.

"In New Zealand have been found many bones of the *Moa*, as he is called by the natives, and he seems to have existed down to the eighteenth century. Professor Owen has named him the *Dinornis*, and the restored skeletons give the bird a height of ten and a half feet! He was a lazy, stupid bird, living on vegetable food, and incapable of flying.

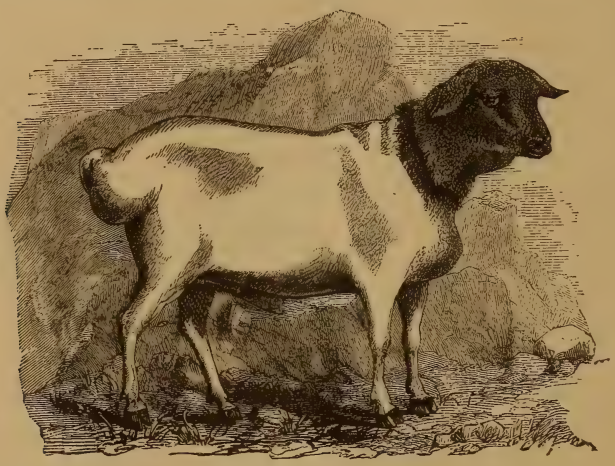


Skeleton of *Dinornis* of New Zealand.

"And now comes the partial confirmation of Marco's story about the roc. In 1874 Dr. Haast discovered in a swamp at Glenmark, in New Zealand, along with some bones of the moa, the bones of a gigntic bird, which he pronounced a species of hawk or eagle. They were sent to Professor Owen, who says they belonged to a bird of prey double the weight of the moa and therefore capable of capturing and killing it. He calls it *Harpagornis*, and says the moa was probably its natural food; the destruction of the moa by the natives who hunted it for its flesh and feathers led to the extinction of the *Harpagornis*, as there was nothing left for him to eat. If the *Dinornis* had a natural enemy may it not be possible that the still larger *Aepyornis* of Madagascar was the natural food of the roc? Perhaps some member of this Society will make an exploration of Madagascar and discover the remains of this wonder of creation. Who can tell?"

Fred's lecture on natural history was warmly applauded, and for fully a minute he was unable to proceed. When quiet was restored he continued:

"Marco has confounded the island of Zanzibar with the coast of Africa. The Arabs called the continent Zanjibar or 'region of the blacks,' and it is only in recent times that the name has been restricted to the island. So we must bear in mind that we are considering the southern part of the continent in this narrative. Africa continues famous for elephants and giraffes, for negroes and camels, and for people who fight bravely and without armor when properly commanded. The African elephant now runs wild altogether, but in former times he was domesticated like his Asiatic brother, so that the stories of his being used in battle are mainly correct. Sheep without wool are common in that part of the world, and the passenger who stops a few hours at Aden on his way to or from India will see enough of these animals to remove all doubts of their existence.



Ethiopian Sheep.

"Abash is evidently Abyssinia, but the Abyssinian Christians do not burn their faces with hot irons at the present time. By the 'Soldan of Aden' Marco means the Sultan of Yemen; Aden was a port of the Arab province of Yemen; in 1839, partly

by treaty and partly by force, it fell into the hands of the English. It was an important city in Polo's time and for centuries afterward, but it gradually declined; and when the British obtained it there were less than six hundred people living there. England has a strong fort at Aden and keeps a garrison in it constantly. The place is hot and without vegetation; rain falls but rarely, and when it does the water is caught and stored in enor-

The Harvest of Frankincense in Arabia. (From an Old Print.)

mous cisterns built by the Arabs in the time of the city's prosperity.

"Esher or Es-Shehr still exists on the coast of Arabia, 330 miles east of Aden. The story about feeding animals on dried fish seems to be well founded, and it is certain that incense or frankincense is one of the articles exported from the place, and also from Dufar, which Frank will presently read about.

It is generally known as olibanum, and is a resinous gum obtained from the trunk of a tree scientifically called the *Boswellia serrata.* Incisions are made in the bark, and as the sap flows it emits a delicious odor and hardens by exposure to the atmosphere and sun. The hardened drops are gathered, and form the article which finds its way to market. It is used somewhat in medicine, but chiefly for incense in Catholic churches."

Fred paused, and Frank resumed his part of the entertainment.

CONCERNING THE CITY OF DUFAR.

DUFAR is a great and noble and fine city, and lies 500 miles to the north-west of Esher. The people are Saracens, and have a Count for their chief, who is subject to the Soldan of Aden; for this city still belongs to the Province of Aden. It stands upon the sea and has a very good haven, so that there is a great traffic of shipping between this and India; and the merchants take hence great numbers of Arab horses to that market, making great profits thereby. This city has under it many other towns and villages.

Much white incense is produced here, and I will tell you how it grows. The trees are like small fir-trees; these are notched with a knife in several places, and from these notches the incense is exuded. Sometimes also it flows from the tree without any notch; this is by reason of the great heat of the sun there.

CONCERNING THE GULF OF CALATU AND THE CITY SO CALLED.

CALATU is a great city, within a gulf which bears the name of the Gulf of Calatu. It is a noble city, and lies 600 miles from Dufar towards the north-west, upon the sea-shore. The people are Saracens, and are subject to Hormos. And whenever the Melic of Hormos is at war with some prince more potent than himself, he betakes himself to this city of Calatu, because it is very strong, both from its position and its fortifications.

They grow no corn here, but get it from abroad; for every merchant-vessel that comes brings some. The haven is very large and good, and is frequented by numerous ships with goods from India, and from this

city the spices and other merchandize are distributed among the cities and towns of the interior. They also export good Arab horses from this to India. For, as I have told you before, the number of horses exported from this and the other cities to India yearly is something astonishing.

The city of Calatu stands at the mouth of the Gulf, so that no ship can enter or go forth without the will of the chief. And when the Melic of Hormos, who is Melic of Calatu also, and is vassal to the Soldan of Kerman, fears any thing at the hand of the latter, he gets on board his ships and comes from Hormos to Calatu. And then he prevents any ship from entering the Gulf. This causes great injury to the Soldan of Kerman; for he thus loses all the duties that he is wont to receive from merchants frequenting his territories from India or elsewhere; for ships with cargoes of merchandize come in great numbers, and a very large revenue is derived from them. In this way he is constrained to give way to the demands of the Melic of Hormos.

Foliage of the Incense Tree.

This Melic has also a castle which is still stronger than the city, and has a better command of the entry to the Gulf.

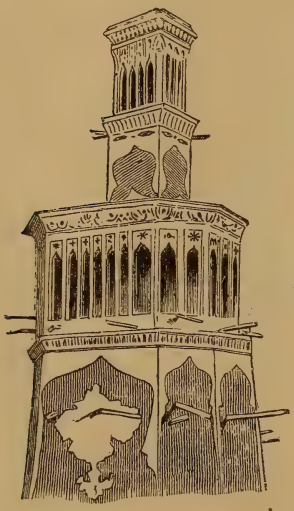
The people of this country live on dates and salt fish, which they have in great abundance; the nobles, however, have better fare.

There is no more to say on this subject. So now let us go on and speak of the city of Hormos, of which we told you before.

RETURNS TO THE CITY OF HORMOS WHEREOF WE SPOKE FORMERLY.

When you leave the city of Calatu, and go for 300 miles between north-west and north, you come to the city of Hormos; a great and noble city on the sea. It has a *Melic*, which is as much as to say a king, and he is under the Soldan of Kerman.

There are a good many cities and towns belonging to Hormos, and the people are Saracens. The heat is tremendous, and on that account their houses are built with ventilators to catch the wind. These ventilators are placed on the side from which the wind comes, and they bring the wind down into the house to cool it. But for this the heat would be utterly unbearable.



A Persian Wind-Catcher.

I shall say no more about these places, because I formerly told you in regular order all about this same city of Hormos, and about Kerman as well. But as we took one way to go, and another to come back, it was proper that we should bring you a second time to this point.

When you leave the city of Calatu and go between west and north-west, a distance of 500 miles, you come to the city of Kis. Of that, however, we shall say no more now, but pass it with this brief mention, and return to Great Turkey.

"There is little to be added," said Fred, as soon as Frank sat down, "and we will soon be ready for adjournment. The modern Kalhat is the Calatu of Polo, but it is only an insignificant village in the midst of a wide extent of ruins. We have heard of Hormos, or Ormuz, in the earlier part of the narrative, and if we consult the map we shall find Polo's distances are quite accurate. The ventilators for the houses are still in use throughout the East, the form varying somewhat according to the country, and the force of the wind.

"We are now," continued the youth, "at the end of the

third book of Polo's travels. On our next evening we shall give you a selection from the fourth and last book ; I say a selection, because the book is mainly devoted to an account of Tartar wars, which would be dull reading for Frank, duller listening for his audience, and would have the dullest sort of comments from me. We have decided to omit all but the descriptive portion of the book, and feel confident that our decision will meet with your approval."

The decision was evidently approved, if we may judge by the way it was received, and on motion of one member, duly seconded by another, the meeting came to an end.

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Exploits of King Caidu's Daughter—King Conchi and his Dominions—Siberia—Travelling with Dogs—The Land of Darkness—Russia and its Tartar Conquerors—Conclusion.

PRECISELY at the time fixed for the next meeting of the society the assemblage was called to order. There was a full attendance; not a single seat in the library was vacant, and the vicinity of the president's desk appeared more crowded than usual.

Frank repeated the explanation which Fred had made at the last meeting, that the accounts of the Tartar wars would be omitted, and he should confine himself mainly to the descriptive portion of the text. "I will first read," said he, "a pretty story which is found near the beginning of the book, and then proceed with the description of strange countries."

OF THE EXPLOITS OF KING CAIDU'S VALIANT DAUGHTER.

In GREAT TURKEY there is a king called CAIDU, who is the Great Kaan's nephew, for he was the grandson of CHAGATAI, the Great Kaan's own brother. He hath many cities and castles, and is a great Prince. He and his people are Tartars alike; and they are good soldiers, for they are constantly engaged in war.

King Caidu had a daughter whose name was AIJARUC, which in the Tartar is as much as to say "The Bright Moon." This damsel was very beautiful, but also so strong and brave that in all her father's realm there was no man who could outdo her in feats of strength. In all trials she showed greater strength than any man of them.

Her father often desired to give her in marriage, but she would none of it. She vowed she would never marry till she found a man who could vanquish her in every trial; him she would wed and none else. And

when her father saw how resolute she was, he gave a formal consent in their fashion, that she should marry whom she list and when she list. The lady was so tall and muscular, so stout and shapely withal, that she was almost like a giantess. She had distributed her challenges over all the kingdoms, declaring that whosoever should come to try a fall with her, it should be on these conditions—*viz.:* that if she vanquished him she should win from him 100 horses, and if he vanquished her he should win her to wife. Hence, many a noble youth had come to try his strength against her, but she beat them all; and in this way she had won more than 10,000 horses.

A Castle of the King.

Now it came to pass in the year 1280 that there presented himself a noble young gallant, the son of a rich and puissant king, a man of prowess and valiance and great strength of body, who had heard word of the damsel's challenge, and came to match himself against her in the hope of vanquishing her and winning her to wife. That he greatly desired, for the young lady was passing fair. He, too, was young and handsome, fearless and strong in every way, insomuch that not a man in all his father's realm could vie with him. So he came full confidently, and brought

with him 1000 horses to be forfeited if she should vanquish him. Thus might she gain 1000 horses at a single stroke! But the young gallant had such confidence in his own strength that he counted securely to win her.

King Caidu and the Queen his wife, the mother of the stout damsel, did privily beseech their daughter to let herself be vanquished. For they greatly desired this prince for their daughter, seeing what a noble youth he was, and the son of a great king. But the damsel answered that never would she let herself be vanquished if she could help it; if, indeed, he should get the better of her then she would gladly be his wife, according to the wager, but not otherwise.

So a day was named for a great gathering at the Palace of King Caidu, and the King and Queen were there. And when all the company were assembled, for great numbers flocked to see the match, the damsel first came forth in a strait jerkin of sammet; and then came forth the young bachelor in a jerkin of sendal; and a winsome sight they were to see. When both had taken post in the middle of the hall they grappled each other by the arms and wrestled this way and that, but for a long time neither could get the better of the other. At last, however, it so befel that the damsel threw him right valiantly on the palace pavement. And when he found himself thus thrown, and her standing over him, great indeed was his shame and discomfiture. He gat him up straightway, and without more ado departed with all his company, and returned to his father, full of shame and vexation that he who had never yet found a man who could stand before him should have been thus worsted by a girl! And his 1000 horses he left behind him.

As to King Caidu and his wife they were greatly annoyed, as I can tell you; for if they had had their will this youth should have won their daughter.

After this her father never went on a campaign but she went with him. And gladly he took her, for not a knight in all his train played such feats of arms as she did. Sometimes she would quit her father's side, and make a dash at the host of the enemy, and seize some man thereout, as deftly as a hawk pounces on a bird, and carry him to her father; and this she did many a time.

* * * * * * * *

CONCERNING KING CONCHI WHO RULES THE FAR NORTH.

In the far north there is a King called CONCHI. He is a Tartar, and all his people are Tartars, and they keep up the regular Tartar religion. A very brutish one it is, but they keep it up just the same as Chinghis Kaan and the proper Tartars did, so I will tell you something of it.

They make them a god of felt, and call him NATIGAI; and they also make him a wife; and then they say that these two divinities are the gods of the earth who protect their cattle and their corn and all their earthly goods. They pray to these figures, and when they are eating a

Crossing the Yenesei River, Siberia.

good dinner they rub the mouths of their gods with the meat, and do many other stupid things.

The King is subject to no one, although he is of the Imperial lineage of Chinghis Kaan, and a near kinsman of the Great Kaan. This King has neither city nor castle; he and his people live always either in the wide plains or among great mountains and valleys. They subsist on the milk and flesh of their cattle and have no corn. The King has a vast number of people, but he carries on no war with anybody, and his people live in great tranquillity. They have enormous numbers of cattle, camels, horses, oxen, sheep, and so forth.

You find in their country immense bears entirely white, and more than twenty palms in length. There are also large black foxes, wild asses, and abundance of sables; those creatures I mean from the skins of which they make those precious robes that cost 1000 bezants each. There are also vairs in abundance; and vast multitudes of the Pharaoh's rat, on which the people live all the summer time. Indeed they have plenty of all sorts of wild creatures, for the country they inhabit is very wild and trackless.

This King possesses one tract of country which is quite impassable for horses, for it abounds greatly in lakes and springs, and hence there is so much ice as well as mud and mire, that horses cannot travel over it. This difficult country is thirteen days in extent, and at the end of every day's journey there is a post for the lodgment of the couriers who have to cross this tract. At each of these post-houses they keep some 40 dogs of great size, in fact not much smaller than donkeys, and these dogs draw the couriers over the day's journey from post-house to post-house, and I will tell you how. You see the ice and mire are so prevalent, that over this tract, which lies for those 13 days' journey in a great valley between two mountains, no horses (as I told you) can travel, nor can any wheeled carriage either. Wherefore they make sledges, which are carriages without wheels, and made so that they can run over the ice, and also over mire and mud without sinking too deep in it. Of these sledges indeed there are many in our own country, for 't is just such that are used in winter for carrying hay and straw when there have been heavy rains and the country is deep in mire. On such a sledge then they lay a bear-skin on which the courier sits, and the sledge is drawn by six of those big dogs that I spoke of. The dogs have no driver, but go straight for the next post-house, drawing the sledge famously over ice and mire. The keeper of the post-house however also gets on a sledge drawn by dogs, and guides the party by the best and shortest way. And when they arrive at the next station they find a new relay of dogs and sledges ready to take them on, whilst the old relay turns back; and thus they accomplish the whole journey across that region, always drawn by dogs.

The people who dwell in the valleys and mountains adjoining that

tract of 13 days' journey are great huntsmen, and catch great numbers of precious little beasts which are sources of great profit to them. Such are the Sable, the Ermine, the Vair, the *Erculin*, the Black Fox, and many other creatures from the skins of which the most costly furs are prepared. They use traps to take them, from which they can't escape. But in that region the cold is so great that all the dwellings of the people are underground, and underground they always live.

There is no more to say on this subject, so I shall proceed to tell you of a region in that quarter, in which there is perpetual darkness.

House with Underground Floors.

CONCERNING THE LAND OF DARKNESS.

Still further north, and a long way beyond that kingdom of which I have spoken, there is a region which bears the name of DARKNESS, because neither sun nor moon nor stars appear, but it is always as dark as with us in the twilight. The people have no king of their own, nor are they subject to any foreigner, and live like beasts. They are dull of understanding, like half-witted persons.

The Tartars, however, sometimes visit the country, and they do it in this way. They enter the region riding mares that have foals, and these foals they leave behind. After taking all the plunder that they can get they find their way back by the help of the mares, which are all eager to

get back to their foals, and find their way much better than their riders could do.

Those people have vast quantities of valuable peltry; thus they have those costly Sables of which I spoke, and they have the Ermine, the Arculin, the Vair, the Black Fox, and many other valuable furs. They are all hunters by trade, and amass amazing quantities of those furs. And the people who are on their borders, where the Light is, purchase all those furs from them; for the people of the Land of Darkness carry the furs to the Light country for sale, and the merchants who purchase these make great gain thereby, I assure you.

The people of this region are tall and shapely, but very pale and colorless. One end of the country borders upon Great Rosia. And as there is no more to be said about it, I will now proceed, and first I will tell you about the Province of ROSIA.

DESCRIPTION OF ROSIA AND ITS PEOPLE. PROVINCE OF LAC.

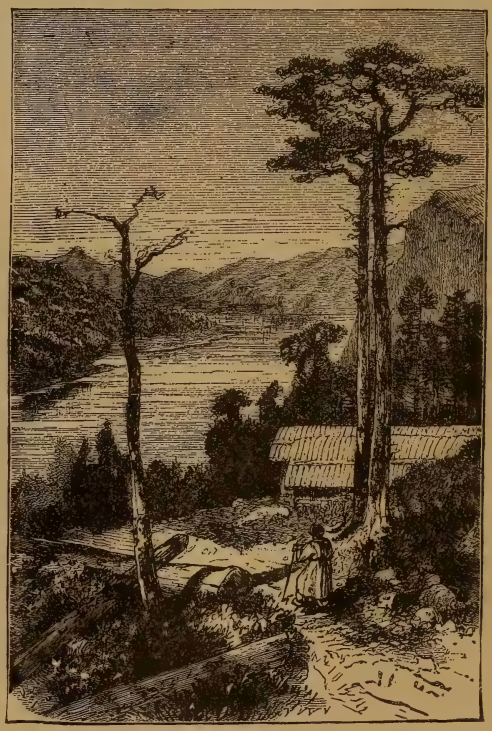
Rosia is a very great province, lying towards the north. The people are Christians, and follow the Greek doctrine. There are several kings in the country, and they have a language of their own. They are a people of simple manners, but both men and women very handsome, being all very white and tall, with long fair hair. There are many strong defiles and passes in the country; and they pay tribute to nobody except to a certain Tartar king of the Ponent, whose name is TOCTAI; to him, indeed, they pay tribute, but only a trifle. It is not a land of trade, though, to be sure, they have many fine and valuable furs, such as Sables in abundance, and Ermine, Vair, Ercolin, and Fox skins, the largest and finest in the world, and also much wax. They also possess many Silver-mines, from which they derive a large amount of silver.

There is a province called LAC, which is coterminous with Rosia, and has a king of its own. The people are partly Christians and partly Saracens. They have abundance of furs of good quality, which merchants export to many countries. They live by trade and handicrafts.

There is one thing more to tell you about Rosia that I had forgotten. You see in Rosia there is the greatest cold that is to be found anywhere, so great as to be scarcely bearable. The country is so great that it

reaches even to the shores of the Ocean Sea, and 't is in that sea that there are certain islands in which are produced numbers of gerfalcons and peregrine falcons, which are carried in many directions. From Rosia also to OROECH it is not very far, and the journey could be soon made, were it not for the tremendous cold; but this renders its accomplishment almost impossible.

"The story of King Caidu's daughter," said Fred, "has a foundation of truth to rest upon. The king had many sons, but only one daughter; she was her father's favorite child, and accompaied him in all his military campaigns. He refused her hand to all applicants, and after his death she tried unsuccessfully to be his successor on the throne. Ai-Yaruc, her name in Turkish, is literally translated by Polo, and is still in frequent use among the women of Central Asia.



Valley of the Amoor River, Siberia.

"The wrestling match between the maiden and her suitors recalls the Tartar form of marriage which we have already described, where the bride, on horseback, is pursued by her lover and his friends. Stories resembling this have appeared in history at different times, and one of them, at least, dates from Herodotus, who says that among the Amazons no girl was permitted to marry till she had killed an enemy.

"From King Caidu," continued the youth, "we will turn to King Conchi, who ruled the Tartars of Siberia in Polo's time.

Siberia is the land of bears and foxes, of wild asses and sables, and of horses, oxen, and sheep. Camels are used in the southern part of the country as beasts of burden, while dogs are employed for drawing sledges and towing boats in the north. On the banks of the Amoor River in Siberia the tiger and the reindeer are found in the same forests, and the trees frequently furnish resting-places at the same time for birds from the tropics and the

The Siberian Dog-Sledge.

polar circle. Nowhere else in the world does nature present so many varieties of animal and vegetable life.

"The white bears which Polo mentions belong only to the shores of the Arctic Ocean, while the wild asses are restricted to the southern portion of Siberia. The mode of travelling with dogs is very much the same to-day as when Marco describes it, but there is one difference that should be mentioned. The teams are always composed of an odd number of dogs,—three, five, seven, nine, or more, and they are harnessed in pairs with a

leader at the head. The leader is the best trained and most intelligent of the pack ; he exercises great control over the other dogs in keeping them to their work, and will often find his way in the dark over a trackless plain when his master is unable to indicate the proper direction.

" The fur called *erculin* is supposed to be the squirrel, as the skin of the Siberian squirrel is well known in the fur market, and is not otherwise mentioned by Polo. Vair is probably the prepared fur rather than the name of an animal, as it appears quite often in that connection in mediæval books. The winter dwellings of the people are not, strictly speaking, built under ground, but they are banked very high with earth, and in some parts of Siberia the floors of the houses are sunk two or three feet below the surrounding level. In the extreme north habitations entirely under ground have been found, but they belonged to a previous race of people whose history is unknown.

" Marco seems to have been ignorant of the true character of the night and day of the polar circle when he calls it a region of perpetual darkness. In the version of Ramusio there is a more intelligent account in the following words :

" ' Because for most part of the winter months the sun appears not, and the air is dusky, as it is just before the dawn when you see and yet do not see.'

" He also speaks of the inhabitants catching the fur-bearing animals in summer, when they have continuous daylight. The story of how the Tartars find their way back again after penetrating this region is very old. It appears in several Tartar and Arab narratives previous to Palestine, and also in the legends of the campaigns of Alexander the Great. In this connection Ibn Batuta's account of the traffic with the natives of the Land of Darkness is interesting. He says :

" ' When the Travellers have acccomplished a journey of 40 days across this Desert tract they encamp near the borders of the Land of Darkness.

Each of them then deposits there the goods that he has brought with him, and all return to their quarters. On the morrow they come back to look at their goods, and find laid beside them skins of the Sable, the Vair, and the Ermine. If the owner of the goods is satisfied with what is laid beside his parcel he takes it, if not he leaves it there. The inhabitants of the Land of Darkness may then (on another visit) increase the amount of their deposit, or, as often happens, they may take it away altogether and leave the goods of the foreign merchants untouched. In this way is the trade conducted. The people who go thither never know whether those with whom they buy and sell are men or goblins, for they never see any one!'

Mediæval Russian Church.

"By Rosia you will readily understand that Russia is meant. It was then subject to the Tartars, by whom it had been conquered in the first half of the thirteenth century. The conquest was not so trifling as Polo indicates, since the Tartar tax-gatherers were throughout the whole country, and their exactions were severe. Lac doubtless means Wallachia, and Oroech is supposed to be a mistake for *Noroech*, which means *Norvege*, or Norway."

Here Fred paused and held a whispered conversation with Frank. It lasted only a few moments, and then the youth continued:

"With the exception of the concluding paragraph, we have now finished the story of Marco Polo's travels. If it has proved as interesting to you as to ourselves, we are abundantly repaid for our efforts at your entertainment. Perhaps some of you may think we have been prolix, have dwelt too much upon details; or, on the other hand, have passed too hastily over

points which needed further elucidation. In attempting to give all the material parts of the famous Venetian's narrative, we have found it impossible to avoid occasional repetitions; and in striving to show how in some cases the world has remained unchanged since his time, or has greatly changed in others, we may have given what some of you consider immaterial. But we have tried to do our best throughout, and we offer you our thanks for the approval indicated by your continued presence at these gatherings, and the attention which has been accorded from the commencement to the close of each meeting."

As Fred took his seat, there was a unanimous clapping of hands through the room, and some of the younger members of the Society emphasized the applause by a vigorous use of their feet on the floor. At a hint from the doctor one of the young ladies moved a vote of thanks to Frank and Fred; it was seconded by a dozen voices at once, and carried unanimously, with more and more applause.

Several subjects were then proposed for future readings, and it was finally agreed to leave the selection to Frank and Fred. The young gentlemen accepted the responsibility thus placed upon them, and said they would carefully consider the matter, and report at the opening of the next meeting. It was then voted that the meeting would adjourn, as soon as Frank had read the final paragraph of Polo's narrative, and there being no further business, he proceeded with the

CONCLUSION.

And now ye have heard all that we can tell you about the Tartars and the Saracens and their customs, and likewise about the other countries of the world as far as our researches and information extend. Only we have said nothing whatever about the GREATER SEA and the provinces that lie round it, although we know it thoroughly. But it seems to me a needless and useless task to speak about places which are visited by people every day. For there are so many who sail all about that sea constantly, Venetians and Genoese, and Pisans, and many others, that

everybody knows all about it, and that is the reason that I pass it over and say nothing of it.

Of the manner in which we took our departure from the Court of the Great Kaan you have heard at the beginning of the Book, in that chapter where we told you of all the vexation and trouble that Messer Maffeo and Messer Nicolo and Messer Marco had about getting the Great Kaan's leave to go; and in the same chapter is related the lucky chance that led to our departure. And you may be sure that but for that lucky chance,

Asiatic Warriors of Polo's Time.

we should never have got away in spite of all our trouble, and never have got back to our country again. But I believe it was God's pleasure that we should get back in order that people might learn about the things that the world contains. For according to what has been said in the introduction at the beginning of the Book, there never was a man, be he Christian or Saracen, or Tartar or Heathen, who ever travelled over so much of the world as did that noble and illustrious citizen of the City of Venice, Messer Marco, the son of Messer Nicolo Polo.

THE END.

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